Liver Biopsy in Kids

What is a liver biopsy?

A liver biopsy is a medical procedure performed in order to obtain a small sample of the liver. This is accomplished with a special needle, and leaves a very small scar.

Reasons why children may need a Liver Biopsy?

The most common reasons for a liver biopsy include the evaluation of:

- Jaundice
- Liver inflammation (hepatitis)
- Abnormal liver function tests
- An enlarged liver

What is the preparation for a liver biopsy?

Your doctor orders blood tests to measure the ability of the blood to clot normally. This will help minimize complications from the procedure, such as bleeding. Before the procedure, the child fasts for several hours, so that safe sedation or anesthesia can be provided. The use of aspirin or ibuprofen needs to be discontinued for at least 2 weeks before the test.

How is the procedure performed?

A liver biopsy is always done in the hospital. After adequate sedation or anesthesia, the skin is cleansed and a needle is inserted through the skin and into the liver and quickly withdrawn. This removes a core of liver tissue. After the procedure, the child is observed and monitored overnight in the hospital to make sure everything goes smoothly. The time of discharge differs according to the age of the child and the reason for the biopsy. Medicine to control pain is provided as needed, although the local anesthetic used will help minimize pain.

What are the risks of a liver biopsy?

Liver needle biopsy is considered a safe procedure. The major risks include:

- Bleeding
- Perforation of the lung
- Gallbladder puncture

After the test, have your parents call your doctor if you have...

- Persistent abdominal or chest pain
- Vomiting
- Pallor, weakness or dizziness
- Bleeding from the site of the biopsy
- Passage of tarry black stools
Your Liver Biopsy Information:

Scheduled for: _____________________

Labs will need to be done 3 days before the procedure.

Preparation: No food or drink after _____________ the night before

Bring overnight items as your child will be admitted overnight for observation.

On the Morning of the Procedure (Arrive 1 hour before your procedure):

Long Beach/Miller Children’s Hospital Medical Center:
2801 Atlantic Ave
Long Beach CA 90806

Check in at admitting in the Children’s Hospital Lobby at _____________.
Then go to:
  o 1st floor infusion Center
  o GI Lab

Torrance Memorial Medical Center
3330 Lomita Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90505

Check in at the GI lab at _____________.

www.socalkidsgi.com