

Bone marrow aspiration / bone marrow biopsy

Introduction

You and your specialist have agreed that you will receive a bone marrow aspiration or a bone marrow biopsy.

What is the purpose?

This is a test in which bone marrow and/or bone tissue is obtained to examine blood production and abnormal cells. Bone marrow can be obtained both from the sternum and from the rim of the pelvis, the iliac crest. You can feel this close to the hard bone in your hip. A bone biopsy can be done only from the iliac crest.

What exactly is bone marrow?

Bone marrow is located in the inner part of the bones. The formation of blood cells takes place in the bone marrow. These cells ensure the growth and maturation of the blood cells.

Preparation

If you are taking anticoagulants, you should discuss with your doctor whether you should stop temporarily.

Examination procedure

The examination will take between 10 and 15 minutes. When bone marrow is to be removed from the sternum (aspiration) you lie on your back in bed.

If the doctor also wants to collect tissue material (biopsy), the doctor will choose the iliac crest. You are then expected to lie on your side with raised knees.

The doctor will first mark and then numb the area where the aspiration will take place. The doctor will then insert a

special hollow needle into the bone marrow to extract a small amount of marrow from it. This will cause a brief moment of pain. The doctor will always indicate when that moment occurs.

The same needle is used for the biopsy. It can be accompanied by some uncomfortable, twisting movements behind your back. This is necessary to remove the bone marrow. This can also feel painful for a short time.

After the aspiration, it may also be necessary to take some blood via a finger prick. This is a part of the examination. After the examination, the doctor will tell you when you can call for the results.

What happens to the material?

In addition to the doctor and the nurse, there may also be lab technicians in the room who will take the removed bone marrow to the laboratory. The bone marrow and biopsy material are examined under the microscope. It can also be put into culture to study how the cells behave. If necessary, the doctor can also have a chromosome test performed. These tests give the doctor more insight into the nature of the disease.

Are there any side effects?

Pressure is applied to the area after the procedure and then a pressure bandage is placed on the wound. You will remain lying down and can have something to drink if you wish. If at home you notice that you are losing blood from the

insertion hole, you must press down on it until the bleeding stops.

Once the anaesthetic has worn off, in the coming days it will feel as if you have been bruised or kicked. You can take paracetamol for the pain.

Questions and remarks.

For any questions and comments, you can call the Day Care Ward during office hours.

Notes on this leaflet

If any information in this leaflet is unclear or incomplete, please notify us. You can share your remarks with us via voorlichting@zha.nl.