

Rectal Biopsy

Preparation Instructions for Your Child

What is a rectal biopsy?

A rectal biopsy is a procedure to take a small tissue sample from the wall of the rectum. The tissue sample is studied to see if the nerve cells of the rectum are normal, abnormal or missing. It will help us diagnose bowel problems and help determine the best treatment for your child.

There are two ways to perform a rectal biopsy:

1. Suction rectal biopsy: This method uses a special tool to remove tissue from the rectum. This biopsy is done in clinic by your child's surgeon. Your child will be awake. They will not need anesthesia (medicine to help them fall asleep).
2. Open surgical biopsy: This method requires your child to have general anesthesia to be asleep to collect a tissue sample.

How do I prepare my child for a suction rectal biopsy?

Before the suction rectal biopsy

There is no special preparation required for the suction rectal biopsy. You may feed your child without restrictions prior to the procedure.

During and after the suction rectal biopsy

- Parents are asked to wait in the waiting room during the biopsy.
- Your child will be placed on their back on an exam table. A nurse will gently hold their legs up while the doctor performs the procedure.
- The doctor will put a thin, flexible tube into your child's rectum and remove two or three tiny pieces of tissue.
- Since there are no pain fibers in the rectum, your child will not be able to feel it when the tissue is removed.
- It is most successful in children up to 6 months of age. In older children, up to one year of age, it may be more difficult to obtain a sample, so the test may not have clear results. If this is the case, your child's provider may then recommend an open surgical biopsy.

To Learn More

- Reconstructive Pelvic Medicine
206-987-1240
- General Surgery - 206-987-2794
- Gastroenterology - 206-987-2521
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

How do I prepare my child for an open surgical biopsy?

Before the open surgical biopsy

Before the biopsy, the Surgery Center will call you with your arrival time and eating instructions. Follow the instructions below to make sure your child's bowel is completely empty for the biopsy.

Purchase the items that are checked at any drug store:

- Pediatric Fleet saline enema
- Adult Fleet saline enema

2 nights before the test

Give your child one _____ - sized Fleet saline enema before bedtime.

1 night before the test

Give your child one _____ - sized Fleet saline enema before bedtime.

After open surgical biopsy

- Your child will not have much pain after the biopsy.
- Your child may have a small amount of bleeding when they have bowel movements for 1 or 2 days. If your child has a large amount of bleeding or it continues for more than 2 days, call your child's healthcare provider.
- Your child may return to normal activity.
- Do not insert anything into your child's rectum for at least 7 days after open surgical biopsy.

When will I get the test results?

The results will be available in about a week after the test. Your child's healthcare provider will call you with the results.