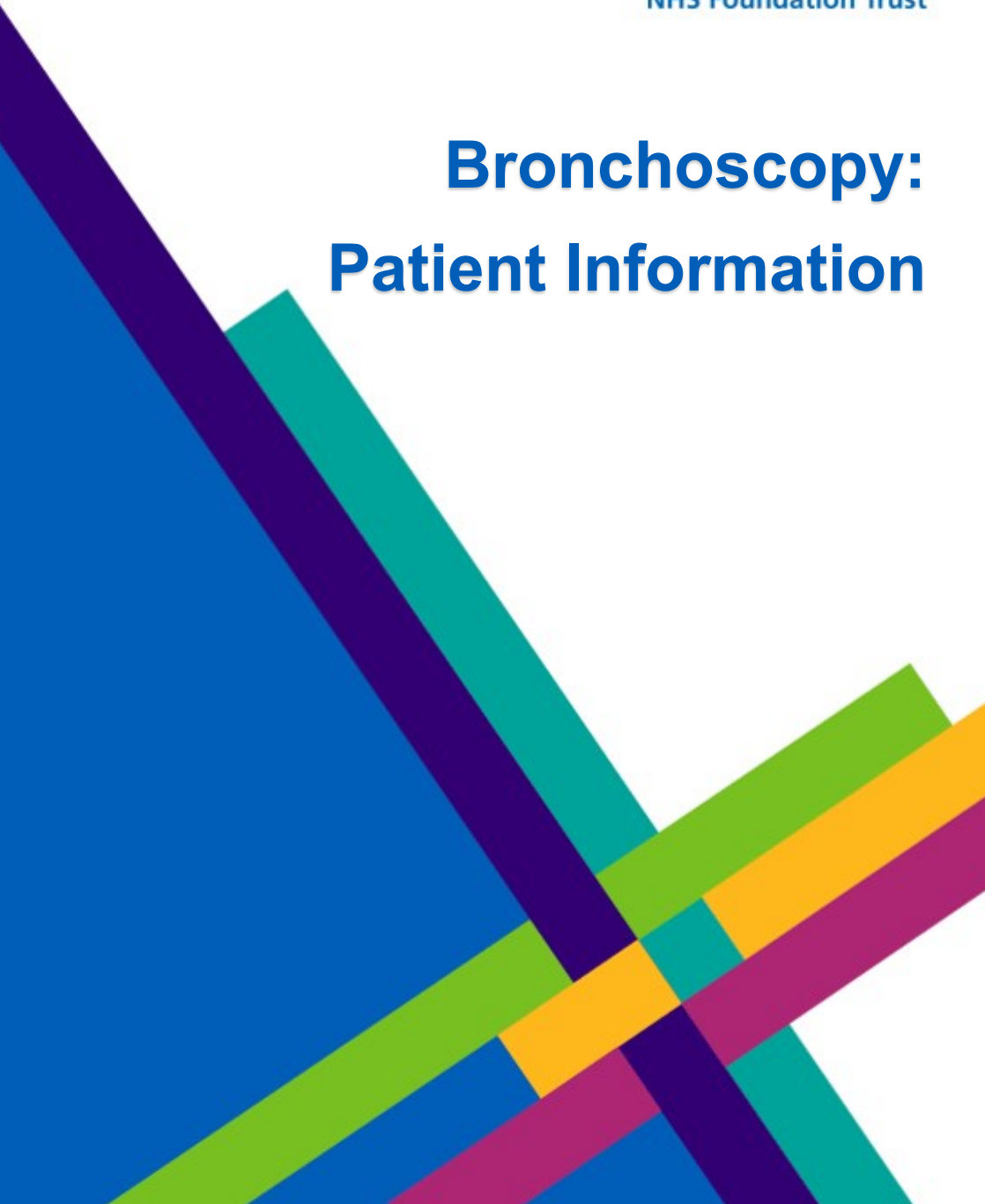




Salisbury  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Bronchoscopy: Patient Information

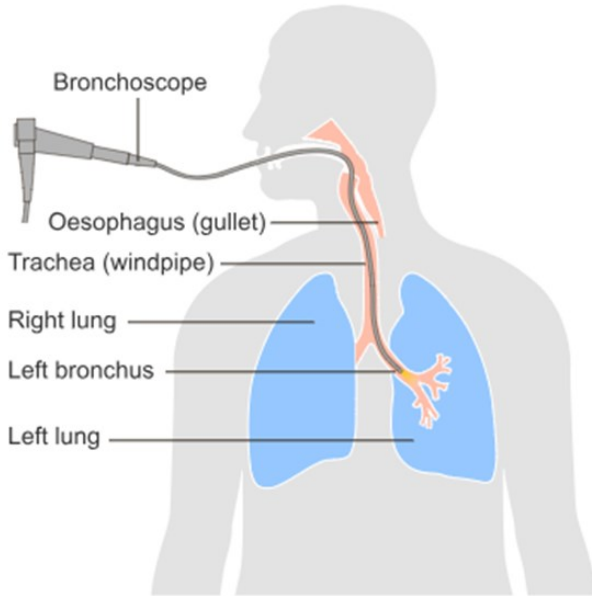


## Having a bronchoscopy

This leaflet has been written to help you understand more about your visit to the Day Surgery Unit and the examination you will be having.

Your symptoms or investigations indicate that an examination of your bronchial tubes is required. This means passing a flexible telescope from your nose or mouth down your windpipe and into the airways (bronchi).

Snippets of tissue (biopsies), or salt water washings may be taken. Mucus visible in the airways can also be removed.



Cancer Research UK

(The above image is courtesy of © Cancer Research UK [2002] All rights reserved.  
Information taken 30/01/2024)

## Are there any alternatives?

Not really. Your doctor will have explained why this examination is

necessary. If you are unsure, please feel free to ask.

## **What happens before the examination?**

**You must not eat within 6 hours of your appointment time.**

**You can have sips of plain water up to two hours before your appointment time.**

## **Can I take my normal tablets?**

As a general rule you may take your tablets on the morning of your examination. However if you are in doubt, particularly if you are diabetic, please phone the Unit for advice. If you are taking any blood thinning medication such as clopidogrel, warfarin, apixaban, dabigatran or rivaroxaban and have not received advice on stopping it please phone the Unit. If you are on blood thinners (anticoagulants) then there are risks associated with stopping them. Please make sure you understand these clearly when you are discussing your procedure with your doctor in clinic.

You may keep taking aspirin as normal.

Please bring a list of the medications you currently take when you come for the appointment.

## **What happens when I get to the Day Surgery Unit?**

You will be welcomed to the Unit by a receptionist. A Nurse will then meet you and do some initial observations and check your details. You will then be seen by a doctor who will be present during your examination. They will check your understanding of the procedure and go through a consent form. This is a good opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

## **What happens then?**

You will be shown into the examination room where you will be asked to sit on the examination couch. In the room there will be at least two nurses and at least one doctor.

You will be asked to confirm your name and date of birth.

The nursing staff will place a small tube (cannula) in one of your veins. This allows the doctor to give you a mild sedative. They will also attach equipment to allow monitoring of your pulse, oxygen levels and blood pressure.

Anaesthetic jelly and spray will be used to numb your nose and throat. This may not taste very nice but it is important for your comfort during the procedure. The bronchoscope will then be passed gently into your nose or mouth into your windpipe. More anaesthetic spray will be used during this process.

The whole procedure will take about half an hour. You will be able to breathe easily throughout.

## **What happens after the examination?**

You will be wheeled back to the ward where you will be looked after by the nurses. You will rest here for approximately 2 hours and then you may go home. You will not be allowed to drink for some time after the procedure as it is important to let the local anaesthetic wear off completely.

The bronchial tubes will become slightly irritated during this procedure. As a result you may have a slight cough, sore throat, hoarse voice or even cough up a little blood. These effects should have disappeared

by the next day.

### **When can I go home?**

A nurse will let you know when they are happy for you to safely go home. Please ask the person collecting you to come to the Day Surgery Unit so we know when your transport has arrived.

You might not see a doctor again before you go. However if you wish to speak to someone, please feel free to ask.

It is important to remember that, even if you feel perfectly alright, the sedation you have been given can make you clumsy, slow and forgetful for up to 24 hours.

Therefore please:

- **DO NOT** make any important decisions
- **DO NOT** drive or operate machinery
- **DO NOT** have any alcohol until the following day.

### **When will I get the results?**

If biopsies or other samples are taken the results can take a week or longer. Your doctor will have arranged a follow-up appointment to discuss these results with you. If you are unsure when your follow-up appointment is please tell the staff before your procedure.

### **Finally**

Bronchoscopy is a minor procedure and complications are rare. If you are worried about something during your recovery, please tell the nurses.

Once you are home, if you develop new green/brown sputum, or have other symptoms you think may be as a result of the procedure please contact your GP.

**Lung Specialist Nurse - 01722 336262 ext 2497**

**Notes:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





Author: Margaret Bonnett  
Date written: August 2014  
Reviewed by: Helen Neale  
Role: Lung Clinical Nurse Specialist  
Last revised: October 2023  
Review date: October 2025  
Version: v2

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust, Salisbury District Hospital, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP2 8BJ  
[www.salisbury.nhs.uk/wards-departments/departments/cancer-services/introduction/](http://www.salisbury.nhs.uk/wards-departments/departments/cancer-services/introduction/)