

# Paracentesis

## WHAT TO EXPECT

A paracentesis is a minimally invasive procedure performed to remove excess fluid from your belly. To accomplish this, a thin needle and tube is inserted into a localized area of your abdomen. The goal is to drain the fluid in order to relieve pressure from the fluid buildup, and/or to take a small amount of the fluid for testing.

## BEFORE THE TEST

- The sonographer, nurse, and/or radiologist will speak to you before the test and address any questions or concerns that you may have.
- You will need to sign a consent form giving us permission to perform the procedure.
- You may have an intravenous line (IV) inserted.

## DURING THE TEST

- You will be lying on a table for this procedure in a way that allows the radiologist to access your abdomen. Your belly will be cleaned and prepped with a sterile solution.
- The sonographer and radiologist will use the ultrasound to confirm where the needle needs to be inserted.
- Localized anesthetic (i.e. freezing) will be used on your skin to numb the area where the needle goes in.
- The needle and tube will be inserted into your abdomen. The radiologist may continue to take pictures with the ultrasound throughout the test to ensure proper placement of the tube.
- The excess fluid is drained out. You may feel some discomfort and pressure during this process.
- You may receive pain medication throughout the exam at the discretion of the radiologist.
- The test lasts between 30 minutes to 1 hour.

## AFTER THE TEST

- You will go to a recovery area for monitoring (if necessary).
- If a lot of fluid is drained, you may be given a blood product called albumin through your IV after the procedure. This protects your kidneys from the shock of removing a lot of fluid at once. You will have to stay at the hospital for a few hours if this is required.
- You can go home once the nurse tells you it is safe to leave.
- If you receive any medication during your procedure:
  - You will be discharged with an adult friend or family member that is taking you home.
  - You cannot drive or operate machinery for the next 24 hours.
  - You should have an adult friend or family member stay with you for 24 hours after your test.
- You must see your referring doctor for the test results.

If you develop unexpected symptoms (including but not limited to: fever, severe belly pain, increased redness or tenderness in the belly, bleeding or excessive leakage from the site), call your doctor and/or go to the Emergency Department right away.