



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Bronchoscopy

Respiratory

Patient information

This leaflet will help you understand more about bronchoscopy. Please read it carefully. The specialist will explain the procedure to you before asking you to sign a consent form.

Your test date, time, and directions to the hospital will also be written at the end of this leaflet.

What is this information about?

This leaflet gives you information about having a bronchoscopy.

It tells you:

- what to expect before
- during and after the procedure
- how to prepare for your appointment.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been given this leaflet because your doctor has recommended a bronchoscopy to help investigate or treat a problem in your lungs. It is important that you understand what the test involves so that you can make an informed decision.

What is a bronchoscopy?

A bronchoscopy is a test that lets doctors look inside your windpipe and smaller airways in the lungs using a thin, flexible camera about the size of a pencil. Fluid or tissue samples can be taken to check for problems.

Why do I need a bronchoscopy?

You might need a bronchoscopy if a chest X-ray shows something unusual in your lungs, like an infection or possible cancer. It can also help find out why you're coughing up blood or if you have a long-lasting cough that other tests haven't explained. Sometimes, it can be used to remove something you've accidentally inhaled, like a peanut.

Is there an anaesthetic?

You will not need a full (general) anaesthetic. **Instead:**

- You will get a sedative injection to help you relax.
- A local anaesthetic spray will numb your throat and nose. More will be used as needed during the test.

How is it done?

- You will lie on a couch, usually semi-upright. The doctor will stand near your head or to the side. After any sedative and anaesthetic are given, the bronchoscope will be gently put into your nose (or sometimes your mouth) and passed down into your throat and windpipe.
- You might feel some discomfort in your throat but it should pass quickly. You won't be able to talk, but you will still be able to breathe normally. You may cough during the test, but it won't hurt inside your lungs.
- The doctor will watch a screen showing what the camera sees. Samples may be taken by spraying saline (salt water) into your lungs and sucking it back. Tissue samples (biopsies) are taken with tiny forceps through the bronchoscope. If samples need to be taken from specific areas, an X-ray may be used to guide the bronchoscope.
- The whole procedure takes about 20 minutes.

Are there any risks?

Bronchoscopy is safe, but some side effects and rare complications can happen.

Side effects include:

- Coughing during the test, even though the anaesthetic will help reduce it.
- A sore throat or nose for a day or two.
- Hoarse voice for a short time.
- Coughing up small amounts of blood.

Complications are rare but can include:

- Significant bleeding or lung collapse.
- Lung infection or an allergic reaction to the anaesthetic or sedative.
- Breathing problems, especially in patients with asthma or chronic lung disease.
- Very rarely, severe complications like needing a breathing tube or heart issues especially if you have serious lung or heart problems.

Keeping you safe

- To keep you safe, your breathing and oxygen levels will be checked before the procedure.
- During the procedure, your oxygen level will be monitored with a clip on your finger, and you may get extra oxygen through a mask. Your heart rate and blood pressure will also be checked regularly.

What happens after the procedure?

- After the bronchoscopy, you'll rest in a recovery area for 1-2 hours while nurses check your pulse, blood pressure, and breathing.
- You shouldn't eat or drink until the numbness in your throat wears off.
- You can go home the same day but need someone to take you. Don't drive or use machinery for 24 hours. You will need someone to stay with you overnight.
- Results are usually not discussed immediately as sedatives can affect your memory, and lab results are often not ready yet. If there is urgent information to share, the doctor can talk to your companion.

When will I know the results?

Your doctor will arrange an appointment in 2-3 weeks to discuss the results with you. Sometimes, extra scans or X-rays may be needed, and the doctor will explain this if required.

What should I do on the day of the bronchoscopy?

- **Eating and drinking:** No food for at least 6 hours before the test. You can drink water (no other types of liquids) up to 2 hours before the test, but nothing after that.
- **Medications:** Take your usual morning medications with a sip of water. If you take medicines like blood thinners or insulin, follow the instructions your doctor gave you.
- **Travel:** Arrange for someone to bring you to the hospital and take you home.

- **At the hospital:** Report at the time given to you.

Nurses will show you to a bed and take your pulse, blood pressure, and oxygen levels. You will be asked to change into a gown, and a small cannula (a plastic tube) will be placed in your arm for any sedative injection later. The doctor will explain the test and ask you to sign the consent form.

Where do I attend and who can I contact if I have a question?

For St Richards Hospital

If you have any questions about the procedure, you can contact the respiratory administrators on the number below.

If you have a problem after going home, you can call this number during working hours. Out of hours, you will need to call **NHS 111**.

Please report to: Chichester Treatment Centre, North Wing,
St Richard's Hospital, Spitalfield Lane, Chichester, PO19 6SE

01243 831728

For Worthing Hospital

If you have any questions, you can contact the secretary of the consultant who saw you. The respiratory secretaries can be accessed via switchboard on the number below.

Please report to: Endoscopy suite, West Wing, Ground floor,
Worthing hospital, Lyndhurst road, Worthing, BN11 2DH

01903 205111

For Royal Sussex County Hospital/ Princess Royal Hospital

If you have any questions, you can contact the respiratory administrators

Royal Sussex County Hospital: Please report to Level 9, Endoscopy suite, Thomas Kemp Tower, Royal Sussex County Hospital, Eastern road, Brighton, BN2 5BE

Princess Royal Hospital: Please report to Cuckfield Ward, 1st floor (above Emergency Department/Radiology Department).

Royal Sussex County Hospital
01273 696955 Ext. 67825

For more support:
British Lung Foundation

Helpline **03000 030 555**
www.asthmaandlung.org.uk

What is my appointment date and time:

Bronchoscopy appointment

Date:

Time:

Place:

Note, you may not have been given an appointment date/time yet.
If not, you will be telephoned about an appointment.
Please ensure the hospital has your correct contact details.

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This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care
in Haywards Heath

Ref. number: 350.4 Publication date: 12/2025 Review date: 12/2028

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