Paracentesis

What is a paracentesis?
A paracentesis is a procedure to remove fluid from your belly. This fluid is removed to decrease pressure in your belly and may be sent to the laboratory for testing. Fluid build-up in your belly can sometimes cause problems with your bowels and breathing if it is not removed.

Important Medical Information
Talk to your doctor about any medicines you take to thin your blood or prevent clots. You may need to change these medicines or adjust the amount you take before surgery.
These medicines include:

- Aspirin
- Clopidogrel, brand name Plavix
- Prasugrel, brand name Effient
- Ticagrelor, brand name Brilinta
- Apixaban, brand name Eliquis
- Ticlopidine, brand name Ticlid
- Warfarin, brand name Coumadin
- Enoxaparin, brand name Lovenox
- Dabigatran, brand name Pradaxa
- Fondaparinux, brand name Arixtra
- Rivaroxaban, brand name Xarelto
- Cilostazol, brand name Pletal
- Edoxaban, brand name Savaysa

If you have a stent, do not stop taking your medicines to prevent clots without first talking to the doctor who put in the stent. For more information, ask a member of your health care team for the patient education handout on protecting your stent.

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

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If your surgery or procedure is canceled for any reason, call your doctor because you may need to restart the medicines you take to thin your blood or prevent clots.

What will happen before the procedure?
- You will be asked to go to the bathroom and empty your bladder before the procedure starts.
- Your temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure will be taken and you will have blood work done.
- When the results of your blood work have been checked, you will be taken to ultrasound to see where the largest pocket of fluid is located. A mark will be made on your skin to show where the needle will be inserted.
- You will be taken back to your room where the paracentesis will be done.

What will happen during the paracentesis?
- It is important not to move during the paracentesis procedure.
- Your belly will be cleaned with a special solution and a numbing medicine will be injected into the area.
- A needle with a plastic catheter (tube) will be put into your abdomen. Some fluid will be removed, then the needle will be taken out and the catheter will stay in place.
- The catheter will be connected to tubing that drains the fluid into a bottle.
- The catheter will be removed when all the fluid is drained.
- A dressing or bandage will be put over the area where the catheter came out of your skin.

What will happen after the paracentesis?
- Your belly will be cleaned and your blood pressure will be taken.
- The fluid taken during the paracentesis may be sent to the laboratory for more testing.
- You may notice less tightness around your abdomen and it will feel less full. You may be able to breathe better which should help you feel more comfortable.
What should I do after the paracentesis?

• You may notice some fluid leaking from the area where the needle was placed. This may last for a few days up to 2 weeks. Keep the area dry and covered to prevent infection.

• You should limit your activity for the rest of the day.

• Do not lift or push anything that is 10 pounds or more for 1 to 2 days after this procedure.

• Talk to your doctor about when it is okay to go back to work.

Call your doctor if you have:

• Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or higher

• Shortness of breath

• Redness or skin swelling around where the needle was placed

• Bleeding or drainage from the area where the needle was placed