

Biopsy

A biopsy is conducted by removing a sample of skin or tissue from a patient's body for examination under a microscope to diagnose a medical condition, especially cancer.

A biopsy can be obtained of the skin by removing a small amount of tissue with a special instrument. This can be done with local anesthesia to avoid pain. Biopsies of the prostate or kidney are typically obtained with specially designed needles that allow for the removal of small amounts of tissue. The needle is guided with ultrasound or special X-rays such as a CT scan. Biopsies can also be obtained from the bladder or ureter with specially designed endoscopes that are passed into these structures through normal urine passageways.

After the biopsy specimen is obtained, it is sent for examination to a pathologist, who prepares a written report with information designed to help the doctor manage the patient's condition properly.

