

The Thoracic Diagnostic Assessment Program

Your doctor has questions about the health of your chest and lungs and has referred you to the Thoracic Diagnostic Assessment Program (DAP). This handout offers information on:

- The care provided by the Thoracic DAP team
- The anatomy of your lungs and chest
- The tests used to look at the health of your lungs and chest
- How to get ready for your test and procedure appointments

What is the Thoracic Diagnostic Assessment Program (DAP)

The Thoracic DAP is coordinated through the Durham Regional Cancer Center at Lakeridge Health Oshawa. The Thoracic DAP team includes doctors and nurse navigators who see patients at Lakeridge Health - Oshawa site and the Peterborough Regional Health Center. This team works with you and your healthcare team to schedule appointments needed to find answers to questions about the health of your lungs and chest.

The Thoracic DAP team

1. A Nurse Navigator

The Nurse Navigator:

- Works with your healthcare team to make sure appointments for tests are booked as soon as possible. Appointments are booked together when possible to lessen the time and distance you need to travel.
- Gives you the information you need to prepare for tests and procedures.
- Tells you about the next steps in your care.
- Answers your questions.

Call the Nurse Navigator at: 905-576-8711 or 1-866-338-1778 at extension _____ from 8 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday - except on holidays.

2. A thoracic surgeon

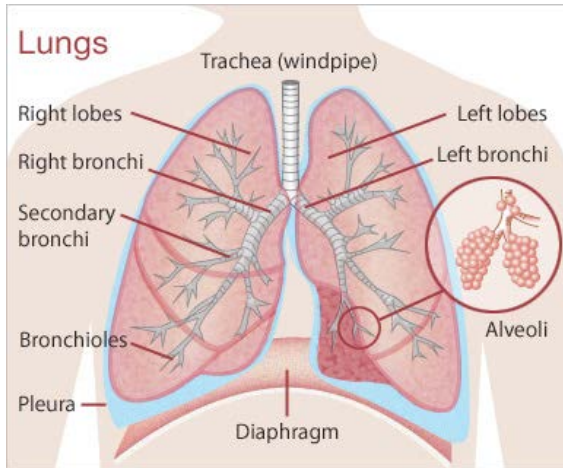
A thoracic surgeon is a doctor who performs surgery on your lungs, esophagus and other organs in your chest.

3. A respirologist

A respirologist is a doctor who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of lung diseases.

Anatomy of your lungs

See the picture below of what your lungs look like. You have 2 lungs located in your chest. There is 1 lung on each side. Your right lung has 3 lobes (parts). Your left lung has 2 lobes. You breathe air into your windpipe (trachea). Your windpipe divides into 2 tubes (bronchi) that lead to the left and right lungs.



In your lungs, the bronchi become smaller (bronchioles) until they reach your air sacs (alveoli). The job of the alveoli is to add oxygen to your blood and take waste gases out. The waste gases are removed from your body when you breathe out.

Tests you may have

Tests are ordered by your thoracic surgeon or respirologist. You may not need all the tests listed below. You will be scheduled for an appointment with the thoracic surgeon or respirologist after your tests are completed. This appointment is used to talk about your results.

Blood tests

Blood tests provide the Thoracic DAP team information about your blood counts, electrolytes and your liver and kidney function.

Bone Scan

This test is done in the Nuclear Medicine department of the hospital. A very small amount of radioactive material is injected into one of your veins. It travels through your body and collects in your bones. The radioactive material is detected by a scanner (a special camera that takes pictures of the inside of the body). These pictures are taken 3 hours after your injection.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

CT Scan (Computerized Axial Tomography)

This test uses a computer linked to an x-ray machine to make a series of detailed pictures of areas inside your body. The pictures are taken from different angles and are used to create 3-dimensional (3-D) pictures of tissues and organs.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)

This test is completed in the MRI Department of the hospital. An MRI uses radio waves, a powerful electromagnet and a computer to make pictures of your body's tissues and structures. You may need to receive an injection of dye (called contrast) to make the pictures of your organs and other structures show up better. This depends on what part of your body is being scanned. You lay on a table that goes inside the MRI machine. You cannot move any part of your body. You will hear loud tapping noises. An MRI takes about 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

PET (Position Emission Tomography) /CT Scan

This test is completed at another hospital. During a PET/CT Scan, you are given an injection of a radioactive material called a tracer. This injection is given through an intravenous line (IV) put into one of your veins. The tracer collects in an area of your body, where it gives off a small amount of energy. The scanner finds this energy and makes a picture of your body's organs and tissues, showing areas where this tracer 'lights up' during the scan.

You lay on a table for this test. This test takes about 30 to 45 minutes. Time is also needed for the planning of your PET/CT Scan. Your appointment is about 3 hours in total. You will receive information on how you need to prepare for this test. Tell your nurse navigator if you are diabetic as this changes how you need to prepare for this test.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

Pulmonary Function Test (Breathing Test)

A pulmonary function test measures how well your lungs are working for you tolerate surgery or other treatments. This test takes about 15 to 45 minutes.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

Procedures you may have

These are procedures where samples of fluid, cells or tissue are removed to be looked at under a microscope. Your nurse navigator or a clerk provides you with the information you need to prepare for these procedures.

If you take a blood thinning medication

The name of your blood thinning medication: _____

- Stop your blood thinning medication _____ days before your _____ procedure.
- Restart your blood thinning medication on _____.

CT Scan (Computerized Axial Tomography) guided biopsy

A CT Scan is used to guide the small needle to the area or nodule being biopsied. This is done in the Radiology Department of the hospital. You can expect to be at the hospital for about 4 to 6 hours.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

If you take a blood thinning medication

The name of your blood thinning medication: _____

- Stop your blood thinning medication _____ days before your _____ procedure.
- Restart your blood thinning medication on _____.

Dobutamine Stress Echocardiogram

An echocardiogram (echo) is a test used to assess your heart's function and structures. A stress echocardiogram is a test done to assess how well your heart works under stress (exercise). A Dobutamine stress echocardiogram (DSE) may be used if you are not able to exercise. A medication called Dobutamine is put in one of your veins. This medication causes your heart to beat faster. It imitates (copies) the effects of exercise on your heart.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

Endobronchial Ultrasound (EBUS)

During an EBUS procedure, a bronchoscope (a thin, flexible tube) with an ultrasound device is put into your mouth and into your trachea. This allows your doctor to see inside and around your: trachea (windpipe), mediastinum (the space between your lungs) and your lungs. During the EBUS procedure, small samples of your lymph nodes may be removed (biopsies). This procedure is used to diagnose lung cancer,

infections, and other diseases that cause lymph nodes in your chest to grow. Read the [‘Having an Endobronchial Ultrasound \(EBUS\) Procedure’](#) handout

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

If you take a blood thinning medication

The name of your blood thinning medication: _____

- Stop your blood thinning medication _____ days before your _____ procedure.
- Restart your blood thinning medication on _____.

Endoscopy (Bronchoscopy)

A bronchoscope (a thin, lighted tube) is inserted into your mouth and down your windpipe to look into your breathing passages. You are given medication (sedation) to help you relax and make you sleepy. The thoracic surgeon or respirologist collects cells or small samples of tissue to be looked at under a microscope through this tube. You will be at the hospital for 2 to 3 hours. You need to have someone drive you home from the hospital. Read the [‘Preparing for Your Endoscopy Procedure’](#) handout.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

If you take a blood thinning medication

The name of your blood thinning medication: _____

- Stop your blood thinning medication _____ days before your _____ procedure.
- Restart your blood thinning medication on _____.

Endoscopy (Gastroscopy)

A gastroscope (a thin, lighted tube) is put into your mouth and down your food pipe (esophagus) to your stomach to look at these areas. Your thoracic surgeon may collect cells or small samples of tissue to be looked at under a microscope. You are given medication (sedation) to help you relax and make you sleepy while you have the gastroscopy done. You will be at the hospital for 2 to 3 hours to have this procedure done. You need to have someone drive you home from the hospital. Read the [‘Preparing for Your Endoscopy Procedure’](#) handout.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

If you take a blood thinning medication

The name of your blood thinning medication: _____

- Stop your blood thinning medication _____ days before your _____ procedure.
- Restart your blood thinning medication on _____.

Mediastinoscopy

A small opening is made at the bottom of your neck by a thoracic surgeon. Your thoracic surgeon uses a long thin tube with a camera to see the inside of your upper chest in the space between your lungs. During this procedure, lymph nodes along your windpipe are examined and a small sample may be removed. This is a day surgery procedure using a general anesthetic. You need to have someone drive you home from the hospital.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

Thoracentesis

A thoracentesis is a procedure that lets a buildup of fluid between your lungs and chest wall (called a pleural effusion) drain out. A thin needle with a small tube attached to it is put in between your ribs and into the space around your lung. The fluid drains out through the small tube. This procedure makes it easier for you to breathe, and allows for the collection of a fluid specimen for testing. Read the [Having a Thoracentesis](#) handout.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

If you take a blood thinning medication

The name of your blood thinning medication: _____

- Stop your blood thinning medication _____ days before your _____ procedure.
- Restart your blood thinning medication on _____.

Ultrasound guided biopsy

An ultrasound is used to guide the needle to the area being biopsied. Before the needle is put in, this area of your body is numbed with freezing.

Appointment scheduled for: _____ Location: _____

Other Tests

Other appointments you may be scheduled for

You may be scheduled for an appointment with:

- A Medical Oncologist.
- A Radiation Oncologist
- Smoking Cessation Program
- Dietitian
- Social Worker

A clerk or another member of the healthcare team will call with information about these appointments.

Notes

Talk to a member of your healthcare team if you have questions or do not understand any information in this handout.

For more information, go to the Cancer Care pages on the Lakeridge Health website at www.lakeridgehealth.on.ca. [Click on Our Services > Diagnosis > Thoracic DAP.](#)

Last reviewed: May 2024