



SERVICES OFFERED

GUIDE TO
COMPREHENSIVE
CANCER CARE

PATIENT / FAMILY
RESOURCE CENTER

SELF CARE GUIDES

TESTS & PROCEDURES

COMPLEMENTARY /
ALTERNATIVE CARE

HOME

In the Know

Connecting Patient / Family Library Patrons To Information, Ideas and Resources

September 2004

from

The Duke Patient/Family Resource Center

The Duke Patient/Family Resource Center is:

- A lending library offering books, audio and video tapes, magazines and free brochures dealing with cancer and certain blood disorders and with issues of coping, survivorship, caregiving, and grieving
- Open 8:30 to 5:00 every day the Morris Clinics are open
- Located in the White Zone, first floor, of the Morris Cancer Clinic, Room 15123.
- Our phone number is 919-684-6955. Our email address is FamilyLibrary@mc.duke.edu

Resource Center Coordinator: [Harriet Whitehead, PhD](#)

Cancer Patient Education Program Director: [Kerry Harwood, RN, MSN](#)

Contents: Understanding Your Tests and Procedures



Understanding Your Tests and Procedures

From Day One there's always been one or another of these lurking on the horizon. Blood work, biopsies, installing a Port-A-Cath, putting in a line, MUGA scans, PET scans, CAT scans, the MRI. Cancer patients undergo a tremendous number of tests and procedures. Before treatment, a variety of tests such as CT and MRI are often done to determine the diagnosis and the stage of disease. Other tests, such as MUGA scans or echocardiograms look at organ function, in order to safely plan therapy. Some procedures, such as central line insertion, prepare you for treatment, as well. During treatment, some of the same tests will be repeated and perhaps others added, to look for response to therapy and treatment effect on the body. You may need to learn a procedure, such as giving yourself an injection, as part of your therapy. Sometimes procedures such as pleurodesis are done to manage a specific symptom. After treatment, tests are used to monitor your ongoing response to treatment and possibly side effects from treatment.

It can take some getting used to. When you are given a list of tests to be done, you may not know what to expect either during or after the test. Staff will give you instructions on any preparation needed for the test and any safety issues. You may have other questions, such as what you should wear, how long it will take, what will happen during the test, and how you will get the results. While having these questions answered may not affect the results of the test, knowing what to expect can make you less anxious and more relaxed. The uncertainty associated with the unknown, even when it's something as minor as an unfamiliar test, can result in unnecessary stress. We encourage you to use these resources, along with information provided by your health care team, to understand and prepare for tests and procedures.

Some general advice: If you are scheduled for a test that requires preparation, you will probably receive instructions in the mail. Follow to the letter the instructions for preparing for the test. These instructions allow the test to provide the needed information. More importantly, they are necessary for your safety. If there is an unfamiliar test or procedure lurking on your horizon and you have not received instructions, refer to the information linked to this newsletter. If you have any questions, call the clinic or department that will be doing the test or your health care

provider.

An alphabetical list of tests and procedures commonly used for cancer patients appears below. Each item is followed by the URL to a useful website that will explain the process and link you to related information. Two especially useful sites appear frequently. One is our very own Duke Patient Education Programs website on Tests & Procedures, <http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>. This site provides general information, as well as specific information about Duke locations. The Duke site will lead you to a printable PDF file. You can open these files using Adobe Reader. If you don't have Adobe Reader, you can download it for free to see or print these files. Alternatively, you can go to Google.com and type in Duke and the name of the test. At or near the top of the list, the Duke document for that test should come up, with a web site address that starts with cancer.duke.edu/pated/materials/Procedures. Select View as HTML if you don't have Acrobat Reader.

The other is <http://www.medicinenet.com/>. If you are not able to use PDF files or Duke does not currently have teaching materials on your test or procedure online, the Medicinenet.Com or the other suggested web sites can be consulted.

A

1. Alpha-fetoprotein Blood Test. Relevant to: liver cancer, cancer's metastatic to the liver, germ cell cancers, i.e. ovarian and testicular.

http://www.medicinenet.com/alpha-fetoprotein_blood_test/article.htm

2. Apheresis. Harvesting of only one component of the blood. Relevant to: leukemia, and myeloproliferative disorder. Also relevant to friends and family members who are donating a blood component, such as stem cells, to a patient undergoing treatment.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

3. Antro-duodenal Motility Study. Relevant to: when the flow of food and fluids through the duodenum (upper small intestines) is mysteriously obstructed, this test will eliminate or confirm the possibility that the patient suffers from a motility disorder.

http://www.medicinenet.com/antro-duodenal_motility_study/article.htm

B

1. Barium Enema, aka Lower GI Series. Relevant to: detecting abnormalities of the colon and rectum.

http://www.medicinenet.com/barium_enema/article.htm

For more details on drinking and eliminating barium, go to

<http://www.healthsquare.com/mc/fgmc0526.htm>

2. Barium Swallow, aka Upper GI Series.

Relevant to: abnormalities of the esophagus, stomach and duodenum.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

http://www.medicinenet.com/upper_gi_series/article.htm

For more details on drinking and eliminating barium, go to

<http://www.healthsquare.com/mc/fgmc0526.htm>

3. Biopsy of Cervix, see Colposcopy

4. Blood Count, see Complete Blood Count (CBC)

5. Blood Liver Enzymes, see Liver Blood Tests

6. Blood Transfusion. Relevant to: cancers that affect the bone marrow directly, e.g. multiple myeloma, or through metastasis to the bone; also to cancers that require high dose chemotherapy.

http://www.medicinenet.com/blood_transfusion/article.htm

7. Bone Marrow Aspiration. Relevant to: Cancers of the blood and immune systems, such as leukemia, lymphoma, multiple myeloma. Patient will experience brief but intense pressure pain when the marrow is aspirated. Patient may wish to request sedation.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

http://www.medicinenet.com/bone_marrow/article.htm

8. Bone Scan. Relevant to: diagnosis and staging of many cancers; monitoring for disease progression in metastatic cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003833.htm>

9. Breast Biopsy. Relevant to: breast cancer.

http://www.medicinenet.com/breast_biopsy/article.htm

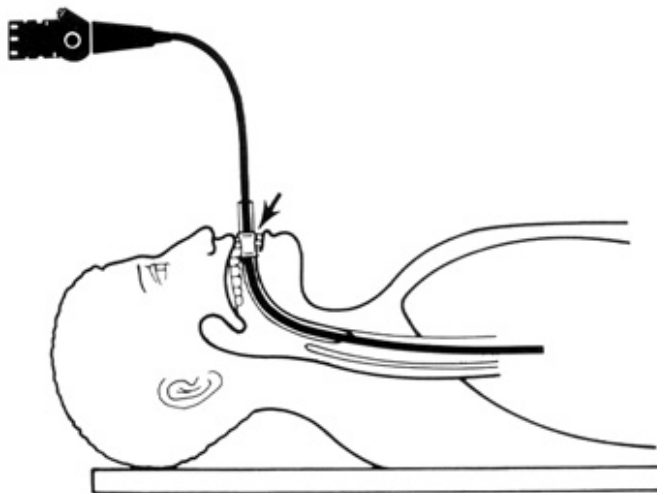
<http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/>

[CRI_2_4_6x_For_Women_Facing_a_Breast_Biopsy.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/CRI_2_4_6x_For_Women_Facing_a_Breast_Biopsy.asp)

10. Bronchoscopy. Relevant to: lung cancer, some head-neck cancers. Typically done under sedation. (Picture reproduced from Zavala, *Flexible Fiberoptic Bronchoscopy*, 1978).

<http://www.medicinenet.com/bronchoscopy/article.htm>

FLEXIBLE FIBEROPTIC BRONCHOSCOPY



C

1. CA-125.

Relevant to: gynecological cancers, in particular ovarian cancer. A blood test.

http://www.medicinenet.com/ca_125/article.htm

2. CA-27.29. Relevant to: metastatic breast cancer. A blood test.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/itemLC140293.html>

3. CAT Scan or CT Scan. Relevant to: a wide range of cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

http://www.medicinenet.com/cat_scan/article.htm



4. CBC, or Complete Blood Count. Relevant to: a wide range of cancers since this is a standard part of chemotherapy monitoring. A blood test.

http://www.medicinenet.com/complete_blood_count/article.htm

5. CEA, or Carcinoembryonic Antigen. Relevant to: cancers of the gastrointestinal tract, as well as breast, lung and certain types of thyroid and ovarian cancers. A blood test.

http://www.medicinenet.com/carcinoembryonic_antigen/article.htm

6. Cervical Biopsy, see Colposcopy

9. Cholescintigraphy. Relevant to: tumor blocking bile duct. This test may be used if more common procedures, such as ultrasound, fail to clarify the situation.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/cholescintigraphy/article.htm>

10. Colonoscopy. Relevant to: colon cancer screening. Administered under sedation. The tough part is the prep the night before and the abstinence from fluids the next morning. Try to get your colonoscopy scheduled as early in the morning as possible so you won't have to endure intense thirst during the time leading up to the test.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/colonoscopy/article.htm>

11. Colposcopy, aka Cervical Biopsy, aka Conization of Cervix. Relevant to: cervical cancer.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/colposcopy/article.htm>

12. Complete Blood Count, see CBC

13. Conization of Cervix, see Colposcopy

14. Creatinine Blood Test, aka Kidney Function Test.

Relevant to: Kidney function in patients receiving certain types of cancer treatment.

http://www.medicinenet.com/creatinine_blood_test/article.htm

D

1. Digital Rectal Exam. Relevant to: prostate, colon, and gynecological cancers.

http://my.webmd.com/hw/colorectal_cancer/hw4404.asp

2. Doppler Study. Relevant to: tumor detection in some areas of the body, such as around the ovaries.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

E

1. Echocardiogram. Relevant to: anyone who will be undergoing surgery or a stressful health procedure.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003869.htm>

2. ECG or EKG, Electrocardiogram Index. Relevant to: anyone undergoing surgery or stressful health procedure.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

http://www.medicinenet.com/electrocardiogram_ecg_or_ekg/article.htm

3. EGD, or Esophagogastroduodenoscopy. See Endoscopy of the Esophagus, Stomach and Duodenum.

4. Endometrial Biopsy. Relevant to: endometrial cancer screening.

http://www.medicinenet.com/endometrial_biopsy/article.htm

5. Endoscopy of the Esophagus, Stomach and Duodenum. Relevant to: diagnosis, staging or disease progression monitoring of gastrointestinal and thoracic cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

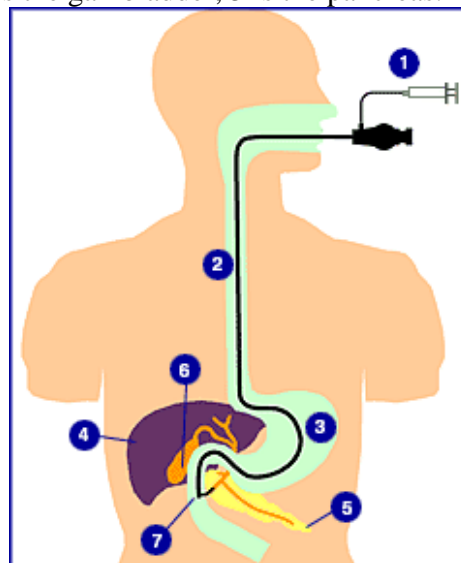
<http://www.medicinenet.com/esophagogastroduodenoscopy/article.htm>

6. ERCP, or Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangio-Pancreatography. Relevant to: bile duct constrictions of all sorts.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

<http://www.medicinenet.com/ercp/article.htm>

Below, 4 is the liver, 6 is the gall bladder, 5 is the pancreas.



7. EUS, or Endoscopic Ultrasound.

Relevant to: diagnosis and staging of gastrointestinal and lung cancers.

http://www.medicinenet.com/endoscopic_ultrasound/article.htm

8. Erythropoietin (EPO) & The EPO Test. Relevant to: diagnosis of certain cancers, monitoring for anemia in chemo patients.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/erythropoietin/article.htm>

F**1. Fecal Occult Blood Test.** Relevant to: screening for colo-rectal cancer

http://www.medicinenet.com/fecal_occult_blood_tests/article.htm

2. Feeding Tube Placement. Relevant to: management of nutritional impairment, such as when head-neck cancer and its treatment have impaired the swallowing function.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

3. FEES, or Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing. Relevant to: tumors of head and chest.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

4. FNAB, or Fine-Needle Aspiration Biopsy of the Thyroid. Relevant to: diagnosis of thyroid cancer.

http://www.medicinenet.com/fine-needle_aspiration_biopsy_of_the_thyroid/article.htm

5. Flexible Sigmoidoscopy. Relevant to: diagnosis and screening of colo-rectal cancer.

http://www.medicinenet.com/flexible_sigmoidoscopy/article.htm

6. Fluoroscopy. Relevant to: diagnosis of tumors in lungs, stomach, bowels.

<http://rad.usuhs.mil/rad/home/flouro.html>

G**1. Gallium Scan.** Relevant to: tumor detection in certain cancers such as Hodgkin's lymphoma.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

H**1. Hemocult Test,** See Fecal Occult Blood Test**2. Hickman Catheter.** See Venous Access Devices.**I****1. Implantable Port Insertion.** See Venous Access devices.**2. Intravenous Cholangiogram.** Relevant to: any cancers constricting the bile ducts of the liver and gall bladder. An X-ray examination. This has been largely replaced by the ERCP (above).

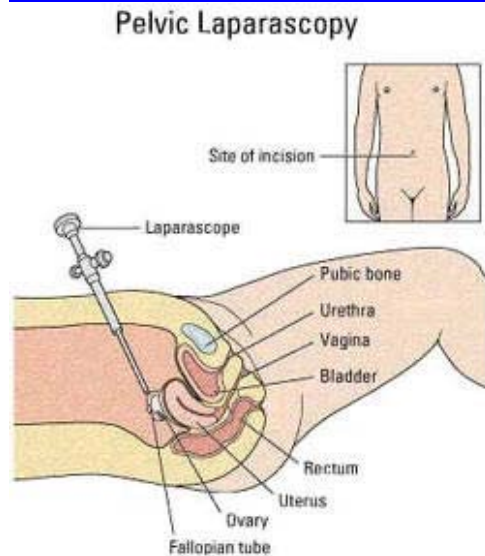
http://www.medicinenet.com/intravenous_cholangiogram/article.htm

K**1. Kidney Function,** see Creatinine Blood Test

L

1. Laparoscopy. Relevant to: diagnosis and monitoring of certain cancers, esp. ovarian.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/laparoscopy/article.htm>



2. LEEP, or Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure. Relevant to: extraction of abnormal cervical tissues for biopsy.

http://www.medicinenet.com/loop_electrosurgical_excision_procedure/article.htm

3. Lower GI Series, see Barium Enema

4. Lumbar Puncture, or Spinal Tap. Relevant to: detection of tumor, or infection, in the central nervous system.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

http://www.medicinenet.com/lumbar_puncture/article.htm

5. Lymph Node Biopsy. Relevant to a variety of cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

M

1. MIBG Scan. Relevant to: detection and monitoring of neuroendocrine tumors.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

1. MRI or Magnetic Resonance Imaging. Relevant to: diagnosis, staging and monitoring of a wide range of cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

http://www.medicinenet.com/mri_scan/article.htm



2. Mammogram. Relevant to: screening for breast cancer, monitoring for cancer recurrence in the breast.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/mammogram/article.htm>

3. MUGA Scan. Relevant to patients receiving the chemo drug Adriamycin for their cancer.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

<http://heartdisease.about.com/cs/otherriskfactors/l/blmuga.htm>

P

1. Pap Smear, or Pap Test. Relevant to: screening for cervical cancer.

http://www.medicinenet.com/pap_smear/article.htm

2. Percutaneous Cholangiogram. Relevant to: diagnosis and monitoring of tumors affecting liver, gallbladder, and bile ducts.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

3. P.E.T. Scan, aka Positron Emission Tomography. Relevant to: diagnosis, staging and monitoring of various cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

<http://www.radiologyinfo.org/content/petomography.htm>

4. PFTs. See Pulmonary Function Tests.

5. PICC Line. See Venous Access Devices.

6. Pleurodesis. Relevant to management of pleural effusions in certain, usually metastatic, cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

7. Port-A-Cath. See Venous Access Devices.

8. PSA, or Prostate Specific Antigen Test. Relevant to: screening for prostate cancer, monitoring for prostate cancer progression. A blood test.

http://www.medicinenet.com/prostate_specific_antigen/article.htm

9. Pulmonary Function Tests. Relevant to: lung cancer, both in planning and following up treatment.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

R

1. Rectal Endoscopic Ultrasound. Relevant to biopsying and staging of colo-rectal and anal cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

S

1. Sentinel-Lymph-Node Biopsy. A version of lymph node biopsy. Relevant to: staging of various cancers, especially breast and melanoma.

http://www.medicinenet.com/sentinel_lymph_node_biopsy/article.htm

2. SPECT Scan. See Pulmonary Function Tests.

3. Subcutaneous Injection. Relevant to: symptom management in various cancers.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

4. Sigmoidoscopy, See Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

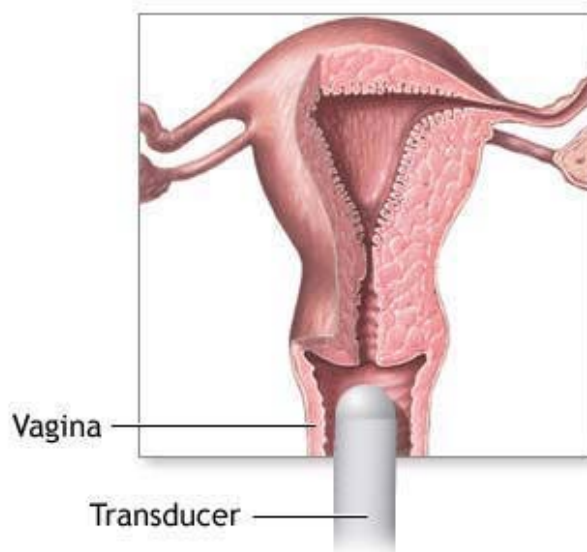
T

1. Thyroid Scan. Relevant to: diagnosis of thyroid cancer.

http://www.medicinenet.com/thyroid_scan/article.htm

2. Transvaginal Ultrasound. Relevant to: gynecological tumors.

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003779.htm>



ADAM.

U

1. Ultrasound. Relevant to: a variety of cancers including breast, gynecological, gastro-intestinal. See for example "Transvaginal Ultrasound".

<http://www.medicinenet.com/ultrasound/article.htm>

V

1. Venous Access Devices, installation and care. VADs include the Port-A-Cath, the Hickman Catheter, and the PICC line. Relevant to: patients who will be receiving

frequent needlesticks and infusions. Patient may request one.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp> Check "Implantable Port Insertion," "PIC-C Insertion," and "Tunneled Catheters Home Care."

<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/articles/22043-1.asp>

Excellent explanation of installation procedure at

<http://www.radiologyinfo.org/content/interventional/vascular-access.htm>

2. VFSS, or Video Flourosopic Swallow Study.

<http://www.cancer.duke.edu/pated/procedures.asp>

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