
Ascitic Drain (Abdominal Paracentesis)

1. What do I need to know about this procedure?

An ASCITIC DRAIN procedure is the drainage of fluid from the abdominal cavity through a large needle inserted through the abdomen.

2. My anaesthetic

This procedure will require local anaesthetic.

3. What are the risks of this specific procedure?

There are risks and complications with this procedure. They include but are not limited to the following.

General risks:

- Infection can occur, requiring antibiotics and further treatment.
- Bleeding could occur and may require a return to the operating room. Bleeding is more common if you have been taking blood thinning drugs such as Warfarin, Aspirin, Clopidogrel (Plavix or Iscover) or Dipyridamole (Persantin or Asasantin).
- Small areas of the lung can collapse, increasing the risk of chest infection. This may need antibiotics and physiotherapy.
- Increased risk in obese people of wound infection, chest infection, heart and lung complications, and thrombosis.
- Heart attack or stroke could occur due to the strain on the heart.
- Blood clot in the leg (DVT) causing pain and swelling. In rare cases part of the clot may break off and go to the lungs.
- Death as a result of this procedure is possible.

Specific Risks:

- Rarely as the needle goes into the abdomen it may cause damage to blood vessels or part of the bowel or abdominal organs. This may need further surgery.
- The drainage tube may block and need cleaning out or replacement.
- After the drainage tube is removed, fluid may continue to leak from the insertion site, or the abdominal fluid may reaccumulate and need further drainage.