Paracentesis in Ultrasound

Your doctor has scheduled a paracentesis to be done in Ultrasound on ______________________ at ________ ( )am, ( )pm. Please report to the G3/3 Radiology desk (Atrium elevators to the 3rd floor). Before the procedure, our doctors will explain what will happen, answer any questions, and ask you to sign a consent form.

Why do I need a paracentesis?
Your doctor has found that you have fluid in your abdomen. This is a problem that can be caused by many things. A paracentesis is done by placing a needle or thin, plastic tube into the abdomen. The fluid can then be removed both for testing and to help you feel better.

There are common reasons for doing a paracentesis. They include:
- Recent fluid build-up with no clear cause
- To help diagnose an infection
- To remove fluid and help the patient be more comfortable or breathe with less effort

How do I prepare for a paracentesis?
1. You need to have blood work done first to test how well your blood clots. This can be done the day of the procedure. Please have all outside lab work faxed to Ultrasound Clinical Program Coordinator at (608) 261-5634. The blood work should include a platelet count and an INR.
2. Please tell us if you take any medicines that thin your blood such as warfarin, plavix, pradaxa, effient, etc. Any injectable blood thinners need to be held for a period of time on each side of the procedure. Your doctor needs to be notified for holding any of your medicines.
3. Tell us if you have allergies to latex or medicines.

What should I expect during a paracentesis?
The doctor uses an ultrasound (a machine that sends sound waves through the skin and creates images on a TV screen) to locate the fluid. The skin is cleaned with soap in the area the doctor decides is best for the fluid drainage.

We inject some numbing medicine under the skin where the doctor will remove the fluid. A small needle/catheter system similar to an IV, but larger, is inserted into the fluid. The fluid is drained out through the tube with a syringe or suction device.

After the numbing medicine wears off, you may feel some pain at the site. It should not be severe, but patients have described it as feeling sore. No medicines will be prescribed. If you have any pain, we suggest you use Tylenol® or Ibuprofen. The pain should go away within the first 24 hours.

What can I do after the procedure?
You can go back to your normal routine, as you feel able. You should call your local doctor if you begin to have symptoms of fluid build-up again. Sometimes the fluid
will build up again, and you may need to repeat the paracentesis.

**When do I call the doctor?**
- If you feel dizzy, faint, or light-headed.
- If your pain around the site gets worse rather than better 2-3 days later.
- If you are not feeling well and have a fever greater than 100.4°F (38°C).
- If you develop redness and swelling around the site.

**Phone Numbers**
Any questions or concerns you may have about your procedure please call **1-800-323-8942**. You will need to let the operator know you had a procedure done in the Ultrasound Department. The operator will then connect you to someone in our department who can help.