This handout tells about bronchoscopy. A nurse will go over the information with you. If you have any questions, please ask the nurse or doctor.

**What is a Bronchoscopy?**
A bronchoscopy is an exam of the inside of the lungs using a thin flexible tube called a bronchoscope. Reasons for doing the exam include:
- find the cause for cough or hoarseness
- determine presence of mucous and removal of excess mucous
- find the cause of coughing up blood
- check for the cause of abnormal chest x-ray
- get mucous samples (washings)
- take tissue biopsies
- diagnose airway injury
- diagnose tumors, tuberculosis or other infections, obstructions, or any other abnormal findings.

**Before the Exam**
Before the exam, a nurse will give the patient medicine through an IV. The medicines will help to relax, reduce coughing, dry the mouth and throat, and reduce discomfort. The patient may or may not have a breathing tube in place before the procedure. Sometimes the breathing tube is placed for the bronchoscopy and will be left in place for several hours afterwards. If the patient does not have a breathing tube, they might also be given medicine that will help reduce coughing.

**During the Exam**
A nurse will watch the patient’s comfort, blood pressure, heart rate and rhythm, and amount of oxygen in the patient’s blood. Nostrils and throat will be numbed with an anesthetic jelly or spray. An oxygen tube will be placed in one nostril. A bronchoscope will be passed through the other nostril, down the throat and into the lungs. This should cause only slight discomfort or a cough. As the scope is moved, the doctor will numb the area ahead of it by spraying with an anesthetic liquid.

**If the Patient does not have the breathing tube in:**
- The patient may swallow the anesthetic jelly or spray, it is not harmful.
- If the patient feels the urge to cough when the liquid is sprayed, it is OK to do so. The anesthesia will numb the area in seconds and suppress the urge to cough.
• The patient will not be able to talk while the scope is in the lungs. The doctor will have the patient signal with hands if uncomfortable.

It is common for the doctor to take biopsies (a small piece of tissue), washings and/or brushings. The patient feels no pain when these samples are taken. X-rays may be taken during and after the procedure.

The entire exam, from start to finish, will take about 30-60 minutes.

After the Exam
If biopsies were taken, the patient may cough up tiny spots of blood. This should not last longer than the next morning. If it does, let the nurse know.
• Eating and drinking may be limited while the medicine wears off.
• The patient may have a sore throat.