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## THORACENTESIS DISCHARGE EDUCATION

Tara L. Buck PA-C

### **Information:**

Thoracentesis is a procedure that is done to remove a sample of fluid from around the lung. The lung is covered with a tissue called the pleura. The inside of the chest is also lined with pleura. The space between these two areas is called the pleural space. This space normally contains just a thin layer of fluid; however, some conditions such as pneumonia, cancer, or congestive heart failure may cause excessive fluid to develop. To remove this fluid for evaluation (testing) or to reduce the amount of fluid, a procedure called a thoracentesis is done.

Thoracentesis involves placing a thin needle or tube into the pleural space to remove fluid. The needle or tube is inserted through the skin, between the ribs and into the chest. This procedure may be done to remove fluid for testing or for treatment. The needle or tube is removed when the procedure is completed.

### **What should I expect after the Thoracentesis?**

- You may notice it is easier to breathe and to take a deep breath. Limit your activity for the rest of the day. Avoid lifting or pushing 10 pounds or more for 1-2 days after this procedure.
- You may return to work after 24 hours, unless your primary doctor instructs you otherwise.
- You do not have any diet restrictions because of this procedure, but should continue any that were given to you by any other doctors.
- Continue all previously prescribed medications

### **Bathing & Wound Care:**

- You may shower after 24 hours; do not tub bath or submerge in water for 3 days (bath tub, hot tub, swimming pool, river or any other body of water).
- Apply a warm compress to affected area for comfort as needed.
- If the drainage site(s) become red, tender, swollen, or start to drain, contact us.

### **Follow-up visit information:**

Call your primary doctor after discharge for a follow-up appointment if you don't already have one. Follow up with Interventional Radiology is not routinely necessary.

### **Occasionally, a situation will require prompt attention and an emergency room visit is necessary:**

- Increasing redness, swelling or drainage from the abdominal access site
- Increasing pain not relieved by medication
- Bleeding or drainage from the needle site that is saturating the dressing
- You have shaking chills or a temperature over 101°F
- Increased shortness of breath
- New pain when taking a deep breath
- A cough that produces moderate blood

With these urgent situations, please call Medford Radiology to see what your best course of action is.

**For any questions please contact the Medford Radiology office at 541-618-5800**

**In all emergency situations call 911**

2/20/2017