



## **What you need to know about getting a Fibroscan®**

**A Fibroscan® is a relatively new test that can reveal any fibrosis (scarring) or fatty deposits within the liver.** It is a non-invasive, quick and simple test that works using ultrasound and gives an immediate result. The only preparation required for a Fibroscan® is a 2 hour fast prior to the procedure (water is fine).

Liver fibrosis is the end result of the majority of liver diseases which includes but is not exclusive to fatty liver disease, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, NAFLD/NASH, alcoholic liver disease, iron overload, haemochromatosis and autoimmune hepatitis.

Liver fibrosis does not produce signs or symptoms, nor are there specific blood markers to determine the degree of fibrosis. Over time, the accumulation of liver fibrosis can result in cirrhosis (severe fibrosis). The presence of cirrhosis and its sequelae has a substantial impact on a person's morbidity and mortality. It is beneficial to identify the presence of liver fibrosis before it becomes severe and complications arise.

Until recently, liver biopsy has been the sole method to quantify fibrosis. This procedure is invasive, painful and carries the risk of bleeding and infection. These complications make liver biopsy an undesirable procedure to have performed repeatedly to monitor liver fibrosis.

### **Examination Process:**

Our specialist will expose the liver area (right upper tummy) and cold jelly is applied to the skin. A probe is placed at the skin's surface. Using a combination of an elastic wave (a dull flicking sensation on your skin) and ultrasound technology, a numerical value is recorded. Ten valid readings must be recorded.

The test is painless and normally takes up to half an hour to complete. Sedation is not required.

### **How much does it cost?**

This is not a Medicare funded test and the cost will be \$305. This can be paid on arrival by cash, debit or credit card. EFTPOS facilities are available.

### **Who should have a Fibroscan® and why is it useful?**

Any individual with suspected liver disease should be considered for a Fibroscan®. Conditions include Hepatitis B & C, NAFLD/NASH, alcoholic liver disease, HIV, thalassaemia, haemophilia and cystic fibrosis.

Determining liver fibrosis will assist disease risk stratification, staging, guide prognosis and aid in treatment decisions. It may provide reassurance to both patient and practitioner, reducing the intensity of further blood tests and follow up. It can be performed on a yearly basis to track liver fibrosis progression or regression.

### **What are the limitations?**

Fibroscan® detects minimal disease and diagnoses cirrhosis with approximately a 95% positive predictive value. Obese individuals have a higher rate of measurement failure or uninterpretable results, however, this is minimised with the use of a specially designed probe.

In the presence of pregnancy, pacemakers or ascites it will not be possible to do a Fibroscan®.