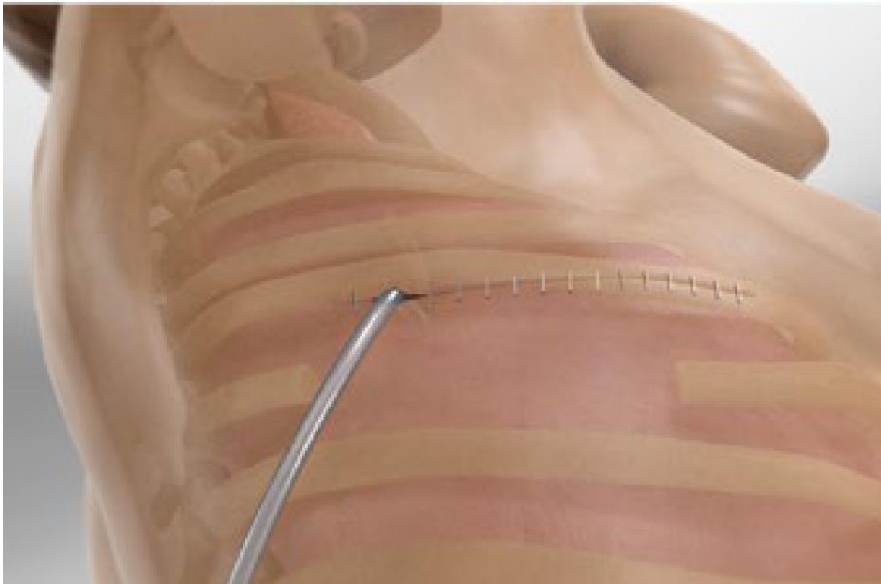
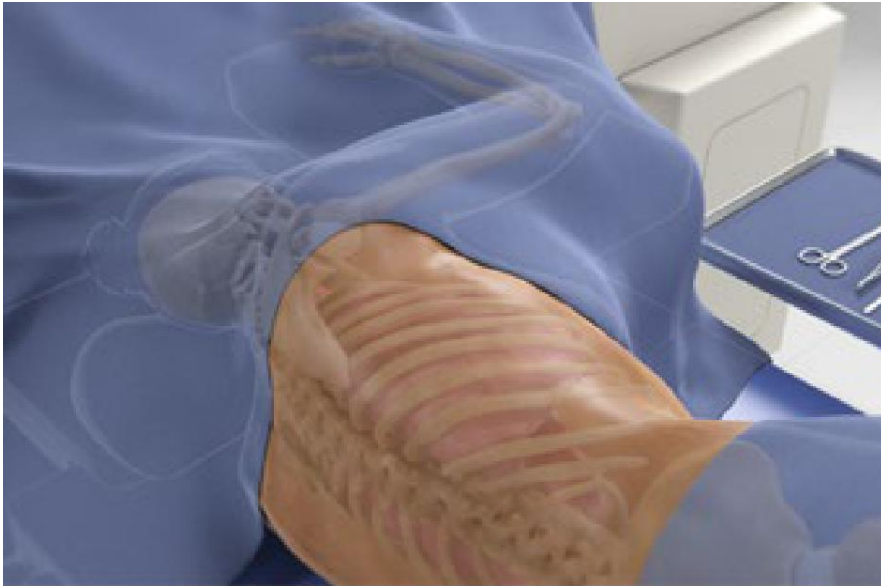




## Thoracotomy



### Overview

This is an opening we make in your chest. It lets us get to your lungs and other organs. We can do several things through the thoracotomy. We can examine your organs. We can take a tissue sample. And, we can perform surgery through the opening.

### Preparation

To begin, medicine puts you to sleep. You're placed on your side with your arm above your head.

### Opening

The surgeon makes a long incision in your side. It goes from the front of your chest wall, beneath your armpit and around to your back. It goes between two ribs, separating them. In some cases, a rib may need to be removed. After your procedure is done, one or more chest tubes are placed. These help drain air or fluid from your chest cavity. Finally, your incision is closed.

### End of procedure

After the surgery, you're watched in a recovery room while you wake up. Follow your surgeon's plan for a safe recovery.