

Image-Guided Breast Biopsy Patient Information

What is an image-guided breast biopsy?

This is a biopsy of the breast, sometimes under local anaesthetic. This may be performed using ultrasound guidance or technique involving mammography with Digital Stereotaxis.

The radiologist will insert a needle to take a sample of cells, which are then sent to a pathology laboratory where a specialist pathology doctor will interpret the specimen. The report will be sent to your referring doctor who will then convey these results to you.

Preparation

It is essential that your previous mammogram and ultrasound films be available at the time of the biopsy. Please ensure that you bring these with you to your examination.

ANTICOAGULANTS

If you take blood thinners such as Warfarin or Aspirin you may need to stop this medication prior to the procedure. Please discuss this with your doctor and inform us when you make your appointment.

HEART VALVE REPLACEMENT

If you have a heart valve replacement, it may be indicated to take an antibiotic cover. Please discuss this with your doctor and inform us when you make your appointment.

Procedures

The procedure may be undertaken using either ultrasound or x-rays to localise the biopsy site, with results available in 24-48 hours.

ULTRASOUND-GUIDED BIOPSY

In this procedure you will be lying on your back. A small ultrasound probe will be placed on the breast to find the particular area of interest and a biopsy may be performed with a needle under local anaesthetic.

The whole procedure will take between 15 and 20 minutes to complete.

STEREOTACTIC X-RAY-GUIDED BIOPSY

In this procedure a special 3D mammographic technique will be used to direct the biopsy. The localisation process may take 10-15 minutes and subsequently a biopsy will be performed with a needle under local anaesthetic. It is essential in stereotactic controlled biopsy that you are very still.

After the procedure

Following the biopsy you will be asked to press firmly on the breast for 10 minutes to stop any bleeding. There will be some bruising following the biopsy. This may be quite prominent, but will always disappear. Rarely are there any significant complications such as infection or excess bleeding within the breast.

You may feel more comfortable having someone with you to drive you home, however this is not always necessary.

The biopsy site will be covered. This dressing is waterproof so you may shower normally and can remove it three to four days after the procedure.

Following the procedure there may be some discomfort. If required, a simple analgesic such as Panadol (not Aspirin) should be sufficient. You should avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours following the biopsy.

If you notice excessive bruising, swelling, bleeding, redness or heat at the biopsy site we urge you to contact the radiologist or your treating doctor.

Please bring any previous x-rays with you on the day of your examination.