

Taking a sample of your breast using a needle guided by hand (freehand core biopsy)

Breast Imaging

Information for Patients

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Introduction

If an abnormal area of your breast is found after a mammogram or ultrasound scan, you may need to have further tests to find out what this is.

This is done by taking a sample (biopsy) of the abnormal breast tissue so it can be looked at under a microscope. There are several types of breast biopsy procedures. The type of biopsy that you have will depend on the location and size of the abnormal area.

What is a freehand core biopsy?

When a sample of your breast is taken using a needle that is guided by hand, this is known as a freehand core biopsy. This method is normally used when the abnormality, usually a lump, can be felt by hand in the breast tissue. The needle used is called a core-needle. This type of needle is used when a 'core' (meaning 'hollow') needle is needed to remove breast tissue.

This procedure will take 15 to 30 minutes and you may eat and drink normally before it.

What are the benefits of this procedure?

This biopsy method is less invasive than a surgical biopsy and leaves little or no scarring.

The results from the biopsy can show whether the abnormal area is a cancer or another condition which may need treatment. A large number of abnormalities turn out to be non-cancerous (benign), with no risk to your health.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Are there any risks?

- **Bruising:** about 1 in 10 patients will have bruising after a biopsy. This risk is minimised by a member of the team pressing firmly on the area after the biopsy.
- **Bleeding:** some bleeding is expected with a biopsy however more severe bleeding can happen in about 1 in 100 patients; this risk is low. A member of staff will press on the site after the biopsy to stop any bleeding that may occur.
- **Infection:** any procedure where the skin is broken carries a risk of infection. The risk of infection with this biopsy is 1 in 10,000; very low. All effort is taken to keep this risk as low as possible.
- **Pain:** the area where the sample is taken from is made numb with local anaesthetic. It is normal to feel pressure and movement during the procedure but not pain. As the local anaesthetic wears off (after a few hours) we recommend taking paracetamol for any pain or discomfort.

How is the procedure done?

You will be asked to remove your clothing from the waist up. You will not need to remove clothing below your waist. You may be asked to wear a hospital gown.

During the procedure you will lie on your back or side on a couch.

Once you are comfortable, the area of skin is thoroughly cleaned and local anaesthetic is given to make the area numb. A small cut is then made in the skin so the core-needle can be inserted into the area to collect samples of your breast tissue. The biopsy needle will make a clicking sound and several samples may be collected.

The samples are sent to the laboratory to be looked at under a microscope.

Care after your biopsy

When the sample has been collected, a member of staff will press firmly on your breast until any bleeding stops. They will then put a dressing on.

Please leave the dressing in place and dry for 24 hours. Do not do any tiring activity, exercise or heavy lifting for the rest of the day. Other than this you can carry on with your normal routine. You will be able to drive the same day.

If you have any bleeding from the site, apply firm pressure over the dressing for 10 to 15 minutes. If steri-strips have been put over the site, let these fall off by themselves.

When will I get the results of the biopsy?

Before you leave we will give you a follow-up appointment for your results. This will normally be within 2 weeks.

However, if the results are not ready, we may have to contact you to rearrange your appointment at short notice.

Contact details

If you have any questions, please contact the nurses at the Breast Care Centre on **0116 250 2513**:

- Monday to Thursday - 9am to 4.30pm.
- Friday - 9am to 4pm.

An answerphone service is available on this number, but messages are only listened to during working hours.

If you need advice outside of these hours please contact:

- your on-call GP.
- NHS helpline on 111 (24 hours).
- Ward 24, Leicester Royal Infirmary (Monday to Friday, 24 hours) 0116 250 2490.
- Surgical Admissions Unit (weekends and bank holidays) 0116 258 5332.

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على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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