

You are having a stereotactic core biopsy



Why do I need this?

Your mammogram or ultrasound has highlighted an area in your breast that needs further investigation, and more tests are necessary. Before you have this procedure, please tell the doctor if you have any:

- allergies
- blood clotting problems/are taking anticoagulants.

What is stereotaxis?

Stereotaxis refers to a computer aided device which attaches to the mammography machine. It allows a practitioner to pinpoint the area inside your breast where an abnormality is located.

What is a core biopsy?

A small tissue sample is removed with a needle. This tissue is examined by a pathologist.

How is this done?

1. We will make you as comfortable as possible for this procedure.
2. We will position your breast in the machine as we do for a mammogram. You will feel squeezing of your breast which shouldn't be too uncomfortable.
3. X-ray pictures will be taken by the machine to identify the area of concern in your breast.
4. We will inject a local anaesthetic into the area to numb the surrounding skin and tissues. This may sting at first.
5. Once the area is numb, a small cut is made in your skin and a biopsy needle is inserted to take several samples of tissue. The needle will make a loud clicking noise but you should feel no pain. Before the procedure, we will demonstrate the noise the needle makes so it doesn't surprise you.
6. Sometimes a tiny metallic clip is placed in your breast. This acts as a marker if the area needs to be found again.
7. When we withdraw the needle from your breast, we will press on the area for a short time. Tiny adhesive strips are placed on the wound with a small dressing.

After the procedure, will I have any pain?

You may feel some discomfort. If so, you can take simple painkillers which you would normally take, for example a headache (not aspirin).

You may find it more comfortable to wear a soft bra during the day and at night until any discomfort settles.

Are there any risks or complications?

- You will probably develop some bruising but this doesn't usually cause a problem and settles on its own.
- There is a small risk of an allergic reaction to the local anaesthetic.
- Infection is unlikely.
- Failure of test, necessitating a repeat procedure.

What about the dressing?

Keep the steristrip and semi waterproof dressing on for 5 days. Bath and shower as usual but try not to get it too wet. If the dressing comes off, keep the area clean and dry.

When do I get my results?

The doctor or nurse will discuss your results with you when they become available. This is usually within 7-10 days.

Any questions?

If you have any questions, please contact the Breast Care Nurse on 01872 252880.

For further information, contact the Breast Care Nurse or log on to www.breastcancercare.org.uk or www.cancerbackup.org.uk

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

