

Breast biopsy marker clips

What are marker clips?

Marker clips are made of titanium or surgical stainless steel and are about 2mm in size. They are inserted at the request of a radiologist or surgeon to mark a site in your breast for later reference.

Why do I need them?

Clips are used:

- after core biopsies if it is felt that the biopsy area will be difficult to locate at a later stage
- to mark a tumour before a course of chemotherapy. This is important as sometimes chemotherapy treatment leaves no evidence of where the cancer was. Following chemotherapy the clip helps the surgeon to identify the area to be surgically removed.

How are the clips inserted?

They are inserted under ultrasound or X-ray guidance. The procedure will be explained to you fully.

The procedure is not a painful one. Local anaesthetic is used and a tiny cut is made in your skin for insertion.

Following insertion, you will not usually be able to feel the clip.

Are they permanent?

Some marker clips are left in permanently. They are useful to show where a core biopsy or other procedure has been carried out.

Are there any risks or complications?

Marker clips are usually very safe. As with all procedures, there are some possible complications:

- a marker clip may be misplaced or subsequently displaced.
- in a very few cases bruising or infection may occur following insertion
- sensitivity to the material is very rare

Marker clips are compatible with all current breast imaging tests. They do not set off airport detectors and do not cause interference problems with scans such as MRI.

Any questions?

If you have any queries or concerns, contact one of the breast care nurses on 01872 252880 or 01872 252881.