

## Stereotactic Breast Biopsy

### What is stereotactic breast biopsy?

A biopsy is when a doctor uses a needle to remove a small amount of tissue from your breast to check for cancer or other breast disease. Your doctor may want to do a biopsy after a mammogram shows a suspicious area.

In stereotactic breast biopsy, doctors use x-ray images to guide the needle.

### What are the risks of a biopsy?

The main risks are a little bleeding and low chance of infection. Most bleeding happens during and shortly after the biopsy. Put pressure on the area to help it stop. In some cases, blood collects within the breast, creating a tender lump that looks bruised. This will heal with time like any normal bruise.

### How long does the biopsy take?

Plan on about one hour for a biopsy. The actual biopsy is very fast. But getting images and putting the biopsy guide in place takes some time.

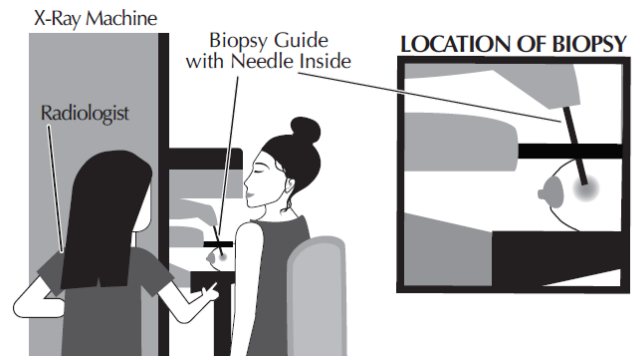
### Do I need to prepare for the biopsy?

There are no special instructions. You can eat normally the day of your biopsy. You will be awake while it happens.

### What happens before the biopsy?

The doctor who will do the biopsy, called a radiologist, will visit with you. He or she will talk about the procedure, get your consent, and answer any questions you may have.

You will sit in a chair facing the x-ray machine. The breast being biopsied will rest on a large plate attached to the machine. Your breast will be compressed firmly between this plate and a second, plastic plate with a hole in it. The doctor will stand beside you during the biopsy. We will try to make you as comfortable as possible.



*Stereotactic breast biopsy*

### What happens during the biopsy?

1. With your breast compressed, the x-ray machine makes images of the suspicious area from different angles. This shows the exact place for the biopsy.
2. The radiologist cleans your skin and gives you a shot of medicine to numb the area. You may feel a little sting or burn, but this will quickly go away.
3. Through the hole in the plastic plate, your radiologist will place a sterile plastic tube into your breast through a small cut in the skin. This is called a biopsy guide. The biopsy needle is inside the guide. The area is numb, but you may feel a little mild pressure.
4. He or she takes more images to be sure the guide and needle are in the right place. Then the radiologist takes a small tissue sample through the biopsy needle. He or she may take more images to make sure the needle has tissue from the suspicious area.
5. Once the radiologist is sure the biopsy is adequate, the needle comes out, but the guide stays in place.
6. The radiologist places a small marker (called a clip) through the guide into the biopsy area. The radiologist then removes the guide.
7. A technologist will come in to apply pressure to the area to stop any bleeding.

## **What happens after the biopsy?**

The technologist will help you after your biopsy. He or she will continue to apply pressure to reduce any bruising, usually for about 5-10 minutes. Next, the technologist puts a bandage over the wound.

You will go home with an ice pack, instructions about how to care for your breast over the next few days, and a phone number to call if you have any questions or concerns.

## **What is a clip?**

A clip is a tiny piece of titanium metal, the same thing used in joint replacements. It will not hurt. In fact, you will not feel it at all. It won't set off any alarms. There is no harm or risk in leaving it in place.

The clip marks the area that was biopsied in case doctors need to know in the future. If the tissue sample removed during the biopsy has abnormal or cancer cells and you need surgery, the clip shows where the tissue came from. If the tissue sample shows no cancer, the marker stays in your breast to show that the area was biopsied.

## **When will I get the results?**

Results are usually ready in three to five business days. The tissue samples have to process for the first one to two days.

Next, a doctor called a pathologist will look at the tissue samples under a microscope and write a report of findings or diagnosis. This is called a pathology report.

The radiologist who did the biopsy will compare the pathology report to the images from the biopsy to make sure everything matches. Once this is complete, we will call you with the results.

## **Should I avoid any activities after the biopsy?**

Yes, please follow these guidelines to allow your breast to heal as quickly as possible.

### **The day of your biopsy**

- Avoid any activity that will move or bounce the breast very much, such as jogging or vacuuming.
- Do not lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk.
- Do not get your wound wet for 24 hours after the biopsy.
- Follow the instructions you are given to care for the bandage. Ask your doctor or nurse if you have any questions.
- Take it easy. Most patients take the day off work to rest. You may go back to work as long as you avoid heavy lifting and activities that move or bounce your breast.

### **The day after your biopsy**

- Do not scrub the wound area or put any ointment on it.
- You may shower 24 hours after the biopsy. Do not soak your breast in water for at least three days. This allows the wound to close before it is exposed to germs that can be in bath water.
- Return to half of your normal activity, but listen to your body. If you feel discomfort, wait another day or two before doing normal activity.

## **Questions**

Call the Diagnosis Care Coordinator for Mammography at **801-587-4603**.