

Stereotactic Breast Biopsy

What is a stereotactic breast biopsy?

When a doctor uses a needle to remove a small amount of tissue from your breast, it's called a biopsy. When doctors use X-ray images to guide the needle, it's called a stereotactic breast biopsy.

What are the risks of a biopsy?

The main risks are a little bleeding and a low chance of infection. Most bleeding is minor and happens during and shortly after the biopsy. In some cases, blood collects within the breast, creating a tender lump that looks bruised. This will heal with time like any bruise.

How long does a 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 on the day of your biopsy. You may want to bring a sports bra to wear for comfort after your biopsy.

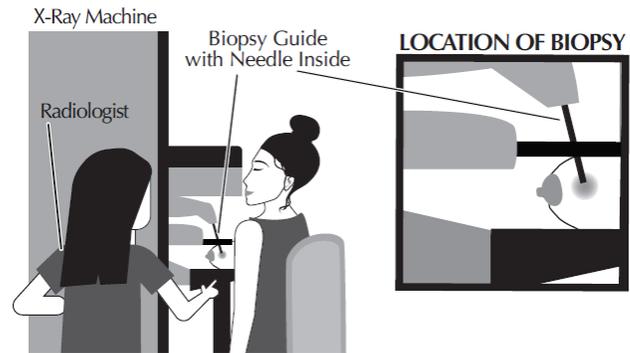
What happens before the biopsy?

The doctor who will do the biopsy is called a radiologist. The radiologist will talk with you and answer your questions. You will sign a consent form.

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 radiologist will stand beside you during the biopsy. We will try to keep you as comfortable as possible. You will be awake while the biopsy happens.

What happens during the biopsy?

1. With your breast compressed, the X-ray machine makes images of the suspicious area from different angles. These images show the radiologist where to do the biopsy.



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2. The radiologist cleans your skin and gives you a shot of medicine to numb the area. You may feel a mild sting and burning sensation as the medicine starts to work. This goes away quickly.
3. Using the hole in the plastic plate, the radiologist makes a small cut in your skin and places a sterile plastic tube into your breast. This is called a biopsy guide. The biopsy needle is inside the guide. The area is numb, but you may feel a little pressure.
4. The radiologist takes new images with the guide in place, then takes a small sample using the biopsy needle. The radiologist may take more images or samples to be sure they have the tissue they need.
5. When no more samples are needed, the radiologist removes the needle, but the guide stays in place. The radiologist places a small marker, called a clip, through the guide into the biopsy area.
6. The radiologist removes the biopsy guide and presses the wound with a gauze pad to stop it from bleeding.
7. A technologist keeps pressing on the biopsy area for 5-10 minutes to help reduce bruising. You will get a bandage over the wound.

What happens after the biopsy?

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.

What is a clip?

A clip is a tiny piece of titanium metal. This is the same material used in joint replacements. The clip will show up on future mammograms, but you will not see or feel it, and it will not set off any alarms.

If the biopsy samples have abnormal or cancer cells and you need surgery, the clip helps doctors confirm the area that the tissue came from. If the samples have no cancer cells, the marker shows that the area was already biopsied.

When will I get the results?

Results are usually ready 3-5 business days after your biopsy. The tissue samples have to process for 1-2 days, then a doctor called a pathologist will look at the samples under a microscope and report the results. This is called a pathology report.

The radiologist who did the biopsy will make sure the pathology report matches the images from the procedure. Once this is complete, your care team 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 your breasts, 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. If you have questions, ask your care team or call the phone number at the end of this sheet.
- Take it easy and consider taking the day off work to rest. If you do work, avoid heavy lifting and any activities that move or bounce your breasts.

The day after your biopsy

- Do not scrub the wound area or put any ointments or creams 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 or pools.
- Return to about half of your normal activity, but pay attention to how you feel. If you feel discomfort, rest for another day or two.

What if I have other questions?

Call the diagnostic care coordinator for mammography at 801-587-4603 if you have any questions or concerns.