

BREAST BIOPSY

Prior to Breast Biopsy:

If you are on blood thinner or take aspirin daily, we can proceed with the biopsy without any need to discontinue these medications.

What is Breast Biopsy?

A breast biopsy may be done using local freezing (like at the dentist) in a clinic setting.

It is a simple procedure to remove a small piece of breast tissue (with a special needle) for examination under the microscope by a Pathologist. It takes 5 to 10 working days for the Pathologist to issue the report. As soon as we receive the pathology report, the Radiologist will send the final diagnosis and any further recommendations to your doctor.

Biopsy with a Local Anesthetic (Freezing):

You will be awake for this biopsy and you may eat, drink, and take your usual medications.

It is important to tell the Radiologist about the following:

- Any allergies
- Any medications (particularly aspirin products) that you take regularly
- Any reactions to local freezing
- A history of bleeding disorders

During the procedure you will be lying down until the biopsy is completed (about 10 to 20 minutes). Your breast will be cleansed with an antiseptic solution. A sterile towel will then be placed on your breast. You do not have to keep completely still, but it is important that you do not touch the towel. If you have any questions or feel uncomfortable at any time please tell the technologist or the doctor. We want you to be as comfortable as possible during your biopsy. Local anesthetic is injected through a small needle. You may feel some stinging as the local anaesthetic starts to take effect. The numbness will last 1 ½ to 2 hours.

A 5 mm skin incision will be made to advance the biopsy needle to the lump to be biopsied. When the doctor is performing the biopsy, you may feel some pressure and pulling. This should not hurt.

AFTER THE BIOPSY

For most patients this is a very minor procedure and you will be able to return to your usual activities within 24 hours.

If there is going to be any bleeding at the skin incision site after you leave our office it will likely happen within the first few hours. If that happens, apply firm pressure to the incision site for a few minutes and that should control the bleeding. In the very unlikely event of being unable to control the bleeding, please continue to apply pressure to the site of bleeding and go to the nearest Emergency Room (we have never encountered this situation in the thousands of biopsies we have performed over the years).

No heavy lifting or exertion/exercise on the day of the procedure. Slowly return to your normal activities in the next few days.

Steri-strips (sticky tape) will be used to close the tiny incision in the skin. You can take a bath or shower on the day after the biopsy and they will fall off in the next few days.

In summary, this is a very minor procedure and you can return to your normal activities on the next day after your biopsy.

Things to watch for after the biopsy:

Some bruising may occur under the skin in a few patients. This is not serious and will clear on its own in a few days to weeks depending on the size of the bruise.

Some patients may experience some discomfort at the biopsy site after the effects of the anaesthetic wear off in a couple of hours. Most patients will require no pain killers after the procedure. If you do feel you need to take something, you could take a couple of tablets of acetaminophen (Tylenol) if you do not have any allergies to this medication or if there is no other medical reason to not take this medication. If the medication does not help the pain, contact your doctor. Avoid taking Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) or products containing aspirin as this can increase the chance of bleeding.

Extremely rarely, you may get an infection at the site of incision. If this happens, the skin will become red, and tender with or without pus. If this happens, go to your doctor as this infection will require treatment with antibiotics. Again, this is very rare.

Warning Signs: Notify your doctor if you notice any of the following:

- Increased blood on your dressing
- Increased swelling of your breast
- Increased temperature, pain, and redness around the incision

Fever higher than 38 degrees Celsius

Follow Up:

Your doctor will receive the results 7-10 business days from the date of your biopsy.