

Breast Core Needle Biopsy

Instructions for Care

The following information will facilitate your preparation for and recovery after a core biopsy procedure of the breast.

Your doctor has determined that a biopsy of the breast is indicated for diagnosis. Biopsies can be localized under the guidance of:

- Ultrasound
- Mammography
(Stereotactic, Tomographic, Contrast Enhanced)
- MRI

The skin will be cleansed with a sterilizing solution, and the biopsy site will be numbed with a local anesthetic. A small incision will be made in the skin through which a core biopsy needle will be inserted. Multiple core tissue samples will be taken. The number of samples will depend on your specific case. The needle is removed, and the incision is bandaged.

The entire procedure may take 1 ½-4 hours. The risks of having this procedure are extremely low. Associated risks include, but are not limited to, bleeding, bruising, infection, and allergic reaction to the anesthetic and non-diagnostic results which may require a repeat biopsy on another day.

Occasionally, it is not possible to proceed with the biopsy because of equipment limitations. This cannot be predicted until we attempt to position you on the equipment.

Before Your Biopsy

1. Call your doctor before your biopsy if:
 - You are currently taking any non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, blood thinners including warfarin, Coumadin, or heparin. These medications may increase your risk of bleeding.
 - You have a bleeding disorder, prolonged bleeding, or easy bruising.
 - You have an allergy to local anesthetics such as Lidocaine, Novocain or Epinephrine.
 - You cannot lie on your stomach for 1-2 hours.
2. Arrive 30 minutes prior to your scheduled time for completion of necessary paperwork.
3. Wear loose comfortable clothing. **You may eat and drink** as per your routine so long as you do not have a large meal.
4. Bring a comfortable, supportive bra, such as a sports bra, for after the procedure. You will be asked to wear it continuously for 24 hours.
5. Procure a small ice pack or gel pack to tuck in your bra over the dressing intermittently for 3 – 4 hours following the procedure.
6. Please bring Tylenol (Acetaminophen) if not contraindicated to take after the biopsy when numbing wears off.
7. Bring a friend or family member who can take you home after the procedure. Please bring an interpreter if needed.

After Care

To reduce the risk of bleeding or bruising:

- a) Consult with your Doctor regarding use of blood thinners or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for 48 hours after your biopsy.
- b) Apply an ice pack intermittently for 3-4 hours following the procedure.
- c) Wear a comfortable, supportive bra, such as a sports bra continuously for 24 hours.
- d) Limit movement of the arm on the biopsied side for 48 hours. Specifically, no heavy lifting, raising your arms above your head or aerobics.
- e) **If re-bleeding occurs, hold pressure over the biopsy site with the full width of your flattened hand or with an ice pack for 10 minutes. Repeat until the bleeding stops.**

To reduce the risk of infection:

- a) Keep the dressing dry for 48 hours after the biopsy. Avoid soaking the area or submerging it in water during this time.
- b) Allow the white Steri-strips to fall off by itself or remove them after 5 days.

For pain control:

- a) Take Tylenol or Acetaminophen every 4 to 6 hours as needed.
- b) Place an ice pack on the biopsy site for 20 minutes. Refreeze for 20 minutes and repeat.

If You Develop a Problem

If you have prolonged bleeding at the biopsy site or signs of infection (worsening redness, soreness, and swelling of the biopsy site or fever) call your doctor.

If you develop problems related to the biopsy, and are unable to contact your doctor, go to the nearest Emergency Room for evaluation and treatment.

Pathology Results Following the Procedure

Results of the biopsy are available within 5 working days. Please contact your physician if you have not heard by this time.

The Diagnostic Imaging Department does not have the authority to give patients the pathology results from their core biopsy.