

How can I contact you?

Breast Imaging Team

Imaging Department
Whittington Health
Magdala Avenue
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Tel: 020 7288 5888 (Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm)

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

[Twitter.com/WhitHealth](https://twitter.com/WhitHealth)
[Facebook.com/WhittingtonHealth](https://facebook.com/WhittingtonHealth)

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Date published: 20/03/2019
Review date: 20/03/2021
Ref: ACW/Imag/AYBNB/01

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After Your Breast Needle Biopsy

A patient's guide



What is a breast biopsy?

A breast biopsy is a test that involves collecting a sample of tissue from your breast to check for abnormalities. This is usually performed by a Radiologist under the guidance of an ultrasound or mammography machine, so that the Radiologist can accurately target the correct area. Local anaesthesia will be given to eliminate any pain during the procedure.

The sample will be sent to the laboratory for assessment and you can usually expect to receive results within two weeks.

If you are taking any heart medication or anti-clotting tablets to thin your blood, then please let us know. Please also alert us to any drug allergies you may have.

What can I expect after the biopsy?

After the local anaesthetic wears off you may experience some tenderness around the area. You may take some pain relief such as Paracetamol for this, but avoid Aspirin as this can encourage bleeding. Some women find it helps to wear and sleep in a supportive sports bra.

It is normal to experience some bruising to the breast in the days after your biopsy and the amount of bruising can vary, depending on the size of the needle used and the number of samples taken. The Radiology staff will ensure any bleeding has stopped before you leave the department.

A dressing will be applied to help keep the area clean and dry. Please leave this on for at least 24 hours and try to avoid getting the area wet while showering or bathing.

We recommend that you avoid any heavy lifting or strenuous activity for at least 24 hours after your procedure, as this can cause bleeding to start again.

What should I do if there is bleeding?

If the puncture site starts to ooze, then apply some direct pressure for a minimum of 10 minutes until it stops. If the bleeding does not stop or your breast starts to swell up, then remove the dressing and apply more pressure with an ice pack or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel. If after 30 minutes the bleeding still hasn't stopped then please visit A & E and bring this leaflet with you.

Sometimes a solid lump will form beneath the skin. This is due to blood collecting and hardening within the breast. It is called a haematoma. If this happens we recommend that you either see your GP or show it to your breast surgeon at your results appointment in clinic.

What else should I watch out for?

With any invasive procedure there is always a risk of introducing an infection into the body. The risk is very small as all equipment we use is sterile. However, if you notice that your breast has turned hot and red, if you see pus leaking from the puncture site or you develop a fever, then please see your GP urgently. You may need some antibiotics to help stop the infection.

Is there anything else I should know?

Your results may be sent to you by letter or given to you at an outpatient appointment with your Surgeon.

For further information about breast biopsies and aftercare you may find the following link helpful

<https://www.breastcancercare.org.uk>