

Breast Biopsy

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HEALTH CENTRE TORONTO

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JOSEPH'S**
HEALTH CENTRE TORONTO

DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING DEPARTMENT PATIENT INFORMATION

Your breast biopsy is scheduled for

_____ at _____

WHAT IS A BREAST BIOPSY? HOW IS IT DONE?

A breast biopsy is the removal of a sample of breast tissue for pathology examination. A breast biopsy is usually done to evaluate a lump found during a breast examination or to study a suspicious area found on a mammogram or breast ultrasound.

Your breast biopsy will be performed in an ultrasound or mammography suite of the imaging department by a radiologist and assisted by a sonographer/technologist. The procedure will be explained to you by the radiologist and you will be asked to sign a consent form that says you understand the risks of a breast biopsy. For the procedure, you will be asked to change into a hospital gown and to lie either on your back or your stomach on a padded table. Your hands may be at your sides or raised above your head (depending on which position makes it easier to locate the area to be biopsied).

Ultrasound or mammographic images are obtained and once the lesion is in view, the breast is cleaned with an antiseptic solution. An injection of local anesthetic may be given to numb the area of the breast where the needle will be inserted. A fine-needle aspiration biopsy is done by inserting a thin needle into the suspicious lump and removing cells that are then examined under a microscope.

Fine needle aspiration is sometimes done to distinguish between a solid lump and a fluid-filled lump (cyst). This type of biopsy does not usually require local anesthetic. If there is little or no fluid, the lump probably is not a cyst and a core needle biopsy will likely need to be done.

A core needle biopsy is done using a larger needle. After the injection of local anesthetic, a tiny incision is made. As the needle goes through the skin and into the lump (or suspicious area found during the mammogram or breast ultrasound), it collects a core of tissue.

Once the procedure is completed, the needle is removed and pressure is applied to the needle site to help stop the bleeding. The biopsy site is then bandaged with gauze pads and steri-strips.

The procedure may take up to 60 minutes and approximately four to five samples will be obtained. These samples are then sent to the laboratory for analysis and your doctor will receive the biopsy results in approximately seven to ten days.

HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR AN ULTRASOUND GUIDED BREAST BIOPSY?

Inform the Medical Imaging staff if you:

- are or might be pregnant
- have had any bleeding problems
- are allergic to any medications, including anesthetics

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER THE BIOPSY? WHAT CAN/SHOULD I DO AFTER THE PROCEDURE?

- The biopsy site may feel sore and tender for a couple of days.
- It is recommended that you avoid strenuous activity for the remainder of the day.
- You may wish to make arrangements to be driven home after your procedure (at patients' discretion).
- Place an ice pack wrapped in a towel on the biopsied breast for about 10-20 minutes every hour for the next three to four hours. You can put this ice pack underneath your bra if

you wish. Frozen peas or vegetables can be substituted for the ice, but remember to wrap with a thin towel.

- Ensure that the biopsy site remains dry.
- Do not remove special bandages that were placed on the incision site.
- Let these fall off themselves. Once they fall off, apply the second set of bandages given to you and then again let those fall off by themselves.
- Wait for 24 hours after your biopsy to take a shower.
- If you suffer from any fever, redness, tenderness or pain three to seven days after the biopsy, see your doctor.

***This information pamphlet is not intended to replace professional medical advice.**

QUESTIONS AND SPECIAL NOTES:

If you have any questions, please contact the Diagnostic Imaging department at **416-530-6001**. Alternatively, you can list your questions in the space provided below and discuss them with your radiologist before your exam.