

Patient Information

Ultrasound Guided Breast Biopsy

What is a biopsy?

A biopsy is a method of collecting a small amount of tissue using a needle, which is then examined by a pathologist for further assessment of possible diseases. Depending on the nature of the problem we may choose to collect a specimen using a fine-needle or perform a core-biopsy. The ultrasound machine is used as a guide.

Preparation

Typically, no preparation is required although it is important to contact us and let us know if you are taking any blood thinning medications or have an iodine allergy prior to the appointment.

How long will it take?

The procedure usually takes about thirty (30) minutes but may take longer if we are required to biopsy multiple areas.

What to expect

The biopsy will be performed by a radiologist who will be assisted by our sonographers.

The sonographer may initially perform a scan to localise the area for biopsy and then the radiologist will come in to perform the biopsy.

The radiologist will clean the skin with antiseptic. The area will be anaesthetised using local anaesthetic, then a needle used to collect the sample will be placed in position, and the specimen collected. This may be repeated three (3) to four (4) times to ensure an adequate sample to be analysed.

Once obtained, the specimen will be taken to pathology where it will be examined and a report regarding your sample will be sent to your doctor.

In some cases, the radiologist may insert a marker for future localisation of the region to be biopsied. This marker or "clip" is made of either nickel-titanium alloy or titanium, a few millimetres in length). This is important for future surgery or follow up. Unfortunately, the cost of the clip is not rebated by Medicare and an additional fee is charged per marker.

After Your Examination

As there is some risk of bleeding and possibly some pain following this procedure, we sometimes like to keep you for observation after the procedure. Our technical staff and/or nurses will care for you and give you medication for pain if required.

After leaving our practice it is recommended that you undertake quiet activity for the next forty-eight (48) hours.

Possible Side-Effects and Complications

In general, this is a very safe procedure, but there are some potential complications that may occur.

The main one is - localised pain or dull ache around the biopsy site.

Rarer complications may include:

- Infection
- Occasionally the pathology on the specimen may be inconclusive leading to the need for further biopsy or procedure.
- As with all medical procedures, unexpected complications may occur including death.

Questions?

You will be given the opportunity to ask any questions of the technicians or radiologist at the time of your procedure, however if you have any queries prior to the appointment, please feel free to contact us by phone or email – 02 9170 4500 or contact@nsrnm.com.au

If you have any questions regarding **why** the biopsy is required, these should be directed to your specialist or the doctor looking after you. We are happy to re-schedule your booking so you can discuss it with your doctor.