

Patient Information

CEM Vacuum Assisted Core Biopsy

What is CEM guided 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. A contrast enhanced biopsy uses an iodinated contrast dye to make it easier to find the area of interest. This biopsy is performed using mammographic guidance.

Preparation

Patients are required to fast for two hours prior to the appointment but keep drinking water. Let us know if you are taking any blood thinning medications or have an iodine allergy prior to the appointment. Patients who have poor kidney function (renal impairment) or are taking Metformin for diabetes will require a recent blood test. If you have difficult veins during blood tests or cannulation, please let our staff know.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing that is easy to take on and off.

How long will it take?

The procedure usually takes approximately 1 hour.

What to expect

- The biopsy will be performed by a specialist breast radiologist who will be assisted by our radiographers.
- When you arrive, you will be asked to change into a gown and an intravenous cannula line is placed in your arm.
- You will be seated in a chair for the procedure. The chair can either be seated upright or reclined. The position depends on the biopsy location.
- Once in a good position the injection of the iodinated contrast dye will start. Two minutes is allowed for the contrast to reach the breast. After this time your breasts will be compressed lightly between plates where a digital device assists in directing the radiologist where they are doing the biopsy.
- It is normal to feel hot, have a metallic taste and to feel warm between the thighs during the injection. These feelings go away within two minutes.
- You will be required to keep very still as even slight movements may move your breast.
- 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.
- Several biopsies may be required; staff will provide information about the procedure on the day.
- 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. This usually takes 3 working days.
- A small metal marker or clip is placed at the biopsy site at the end of the procedure. The clip is very small, MRI safe and goes undetected through airport security.

After Your Examination

- After your biopsy you will be given an ice pack. The ice pack provided should be pressed against the site of the biopsy (not at the skin nick – this biopsy spot will be indicated by the doctor performing the study) for at least ten (10) minutes.
- The Band-Aid or steristrips used to cover the skin nick is to prevent infection. Please avoid getting the area wet until the next morning's shower. To reduce the risk of infection, it is recommended you do not swim or have a bath the following day.
- After the shower pat the steristrips dry, leaving them intact for 48hours.
- If at the time of steristrip removal, the nick is wet with fresh blood, apply a normal Band-Aid, otherwise leave it uncovered. The nick will heal fully in one week.
- The local anaesthesia will wear off in about two (2) hours. Paracetamol (Panadol or the like) is recommended for pain if necessary. Do not take aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (such as Nurofen) since these drugs will increase the likelihood of bruising.
- **Note:** Some patients are allergic to the adhesive in Band-Aids and although rare this would be evident as skin irritation (burning, redness, blisters).
- **Take it easy for the next 24-48 hours.** Avoid strenuous activity involving the upper body (sports, exercise, housework, heavy lifting)
- **Stay well hydrated.** This helps to clear the iodinated contrast dye from your system.

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Possible Side-Effects and Complications

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

The main ones are:

- Localised pain or dull ache around the biopsy site.
- Bleeding and bruising at biopsy site.
- Increasing redness or swelling.
- Extravasation- leakage of the iodinated contrast outside of the vein into the surrounding tissue.

Rarer complications may include:

- Infection
- Occasionally the pathology on the specimen may be inconclusive leading to the need for further biopsy or procedure.
- Allergic reaction to the iodinated contrast- Severe reactions are uncommon occurring in less than 1 in 100,000 patients.

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 breast@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 to allow for discussions with your doctor.

