

X-ray (stereotactic) guided Vacuum-Assisted Biopsy

Breast Imaging, Radiology

Your doctor or a member of the breast imaging team have advised you to have an X-ray guided vacuum assisted biopsy. This leaflet has been written to help you understand what the procedure involves.

What is an X-ray guided vacuum assisted biopsy?

An X-ray guided vacuum assisted biopsy removes pieces of tissue (biopsy sample) using X-rays to locate the abnormality seen on your mammograms. The vacuum assisted biopsy needle is slightly larger and has gentle suction applied to it allowing removal of more tissue than a standard biopsy.

What are the benefits of having the procedure?

Your doctor or a member of the breast imaging team will discuss the benefits with you prior to undertaking the procedure.

An abnormality has shown on your mammogram (X-ray of your breasts) and a sample of tissue needs to be taken to find out what it is. The X-ray machine produces a detailed picture of the breast and the images can be used to locate the position of the abnormality within the breast.

You may have already had a biopsy of this abnormality previously. A Vacuum Assisted biopsy is used to take slightly larger tissue samples than you may have previously had taken. This can help to find out what the abnormality is.

What are the risks of the procedure?

- There are some risks involved with the use of x-rays. The overriding concern of your doctor and radiology team is to ensure that when radiation is used the benefits from making the right diagnosis outweigh any small risk involved.
- X-rays can very rarely cause cancer. According to the National Breast Screening Programme having a mammogram every 3 years for 20 years can very slightly increase the chance of getting cancer over a woman's lifetime.
- Radiologists / Radiographers who perform the examination are trained to ensure that the radiation dose associated with the examination is always kept to a minimum.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- **Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available**
- **If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111**
- **Keep the environment clean and tidy**
- **Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.**

- A small amount of bleeding may occur at the biopsy site, and bruising to the breast is common. Sometimes the bruise may make your breast feel lumpy, or it may make a lump that you have already felt feel bigger than it did before.

If you are on any blood thinning medication please contact the Radiology department straight away.

- Infection at the biopsy site is rare but a possibility.
- In some cases a biopsy that has been performed may need to be repeated or you may require other tests. If this is the case, then a Nurse or Doctor will discuss this with you.

What will I need to do before the procedure?

- Please bring with you a list of your medication (we will need to know about certain medications before this procedure).
- You will be asked to remove the clothing from the top half of your body, including your bra, and wear a hospital gown. It is easier to wear a skirt or trousers instead of a dress for your appointment.
- The specialist undertaking the procedure (or someone trained to take consent) will explain the procedure to you and you will have the opportunity to ask questions.
- The specialist will also check some details with you including certain medications.
- We must seek your consent for any procedure or treatment beforehand. The specialist undertaking the procedure (or professional trained to take consent) will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives where relevant, before they ask for your consent. If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure or treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to ask for more information.

How long will I be at the hospital for?

Please expect to be at the hospital for at least 45 minutes.

What will happen during the procedure?

- You will be taken into the x-ray room and asked to sit on a chair. Sometimes the procedure has to be undertaken with you lying down, this depends upon the position of the abnormality within your breast.
- The radiographer will position your breast into the x-ray machine and the breast will be compressed (squashed) so that you are kept still and a clear x-ray can be taken. The compression stays on the breast during the whole procedure, which usually takes around 15 minutes.
- X-rays are taken to target the abnormality within your breast, sometimes your breast may need to be repositioned in the machine to get the most information.
- A local anaesthetic will be given (by injection through the skin into the breast) to numb the area around where the tissue needs to be taken from. The specialist will ensure that the area is numb before proceeding.
- A tiny cut is made in the skin.
- The vacuum assisted biopsy needle is placed into the breast at the targeted abnormality.
- Once in position, the needle stays in your breast while several samples of tissue are taken.
- When a sample of tissue is taken you will hear a 'whirring' noise.
- Despite taking several samples of tissue there will be only one visible cut on the skin surface unless we have told you that we would like to perform a second procedure.

- You can choose to stop the procedure at any point during the procedure but this may mean we do not have tissue diagnosis to decide best treatment.

What will happen after the procedure?

- Sometimes a breast marker clip will need to be deployed (inserted) at the site of the procedure. If this is required then the specialist undertaking the procedure will explain this to you and you will be given a separate leaflet about this.
- The Radiographer will press on the area of the breast where the biopsy was taken from for a couple of minutes to minimise bruising.
- A small dressing will be applied to the site that the biopsy was taken from.
- You will then be able to get dressed.
- Arrangements will be made as to how you will get the results of the biopsy.

What is the aftercare advice?

Most women feel some discomfort and experience bruising to the breast following the procedure. If your breasts feel tender following the examination please take over the counter painkillers, such as Paracetamol, as per the instructions on the packet. Avoid products containing aspirin.

It is recommended to avoid heavy lifting for 24 hours following the procedure. Lifting small babies, less than one year old is not considered heavy lifting.

The dressing can be removed after 24 hours; you do not need to reapply another dressing. Keep the site clean and dry.

Underwired bras can be worn as normal following the biopsy.

Will it be painful?

Some patients experience discomfort or pain when the compression is applied and when the local anaesthetic is given. The local anaesthetic used works quickly and the area will go numb. Some patients experience aching and discomfort of the breast following the procedure, once the local anaesthetic wears off.

Are there any alternatives to a vacuum-assisted biopsy?

The only alternative procedure that can be offered is a standard core biopsy which uses a different needle and technique yielding a much smaller tissue sample. Your Doctor or Breast Imaging specialist will explain to you the reasons why a larger tissue sample is required for a definitive diagnosis in your case (to find out exactly what the abnormality is). You can decline to have the procedure, however we will not be able to make a diagnosis without an adequate sample of tissue.

Can I go back to work?

Yes, you can however it is recommended to avoid heavy lifting activities. Carrying small babies, less than a year old is not considered heavy lifting. In our experience discomfort felt post procedure is minor and does not impact on normal routine activities such as driving.

What follow up should I expect?

Your Doctor/member of the Breast Imaging team will discuss how you will get the results of the biopsy with you.

What to do if the appointment is not suitable?

We are happy to change your appointment; however please be aware that certain sessions within the week will not be available due to different clinics being supported by breast imaging. You can contact us on **01902 695923**. This is a direct line; you will not need to go through switchboard.

If you are unable to attend your appointment please let us know as soon as possible so that the appointment can be given to another patient.

Whom can I speak to if I want to ask questions before I come for my vacuum assisted biopsy?

The breast care nurses can be contacted on **01902 695144** during office hours of 8:30am and 4pm. There is a 24 hour answer machine on this line and if the breast care nurses are unavailable then please leave your name and telephone number and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

Alternatively if you would like to speak to a radiographer/sonographer about the procedure then please call **01902 695923** during office hours of 8:30am to 5pm.

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。