



Breast Core Needle Biopsy

Instructions for Care

The following information will facilitate your preparation for and recovery after a core biopsy procedure of the breast.

Your doctor has determined that a biopsy of the breast is indicated for diagnosis. The biopsy area will be localized by a computerized, stereotactic guidance system, by MRI or by ultrasound. The skin will be cleansed with a sterilizing solution and the biopsy site will be numbed with a local anesthetic. A small incision will be made in the skin through which a core biopsy needle will be inserted. Multiple core tissue samples will be taken. The number of samples will depend on your specific case. The needle is removed, and the incision is bandaged. Apply an ice pack intermittently over the dressing for the first 3 – 4 hours following the procedure.

The entire procedure may take from 1-1/2 to 2 hours. The risk of having this procedure is extremely low. Associate risks include, but are not limited to, bleeding, bruising, infection, allergic reaction to the anesthetic and non-diagnostic test results which may require a repeat biopsy on another day.

Occasionally, it is not possible to proceed with the biopsy because of equipment limitations. This cannot be predicted until we attempt to position you on the equipment.

Preparation Before Your Biopsy

1. Call your doctor before your biopsy if:
 - a) You are taking any non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (such as aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil)), blood thinners including warfarin, Coumadin or heparin.
 - b) You have a bleeding disorder, prolonged bleeding or bruise easily.
 - c) You have an allergy to local anesthetics such as Lidocaine or Novocain.
 - d) You are not capable of lying on your stomach for 1 hour.
2. The department is located in Diagnostic Imaging on the 3rd floor of BC Cancer, 600 W. 10th Ave, Vancouver, BC. V5Z 4E6.
3. If you are going to be late, or are having difficulty finding the department please call 604-877-6000 extension 2285.
4. Arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled time for completion of necessary paperwork.
5. Wear loose comfortable clothing. You may eat and drink as per your routine so long as you do not have a large meal.
6. Bring a comfortable, supportive bra, such as a sports bra, for after the procedure. You will be asked to wear it continuously for 24 hours, and may use the bra to tuck in an ice pack intermittently over the dressing for the first 3 – 4 hours following the procedure.
7. If possible, bring a friend or family member who can take you home after the procedure. Please bring an interpreter if needed.

After Care

To reduce the risk of bleeding or bruising:

- a) Consult with you Doctor regarding use of blood thinners or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for 48 hours after your biopsy.

- b) Apply ice pack intermittently for 3-4 hours following the procedure.
- c) Wear a comfortable, supportive bra continuously for 24 hours after the procedure.
- d) Limit movement of arm for 48 hours, that is – no heavy lifting, raising your arms above your head or aerobics.
- e) If re-bleeding occurs, hold pressure over the biopsy site with the full width of your flattened hand or with an ice pack for 10 minutes. Repeat until the bleeding stops.

To reduce the risk of infection:

- a) Keep the breast clean and dry after your biopsy.
- b) Do not take a shower for 48 hours afterward.
- c) Allow the white Steri-strips to fall off by themselves or remove them after 5 days.

For pain control:

- a) Take Tylenol or acetaminophen every 4 to 6 hours as needed.
- b) Place an ice pack on the biopsy site for 20 minutes. Re-freeze for 20 minutes and repeat.

If You Develop a Problem

If you have prolonged bleeding at the biopsy site or signs of infection (worsening redness, soreness, and swelling of the biopsy site or fever) call your doctor.

If you develop problems related to the biopsy, and are unable to contact your doctor, go to the nearest Emergency Room for evaluation and treatment.

Results

The Diagnostic Imaging Department does not have the authority to give patients the pathology results from their core biopsy. Pathology results following the procedure are sent to the patient's doctor within 5 working days. Please call your physician if you have not heard by this time.