

STEREOTACTIC BIOPSY

A stereotactic breast biopsy uses mammography- a specific type of breast imaging that uses low-dose x-rays- to help locate breast abnormality and remove a tissue sample for examination under a microscope. It is less invasive than a surgical biopsy. It leaves little to no scarring.

Why is it done?

A stereotactic breast biopsy may be performed when a mammogram show a breast abnormality such as a suspicious mass, microcalcifications (which are tiny clusters of calcium deposits), or a distortion in the structure of the breast.

How to prepare:

- You will want to wear 2 piece comfortable clothing and a good supportive bra.
- You should not wear deodorant, powder, lotion or perfume under your arms or on your breast on the day of the exam.
- Please inform your staff if you have any known bleeding problems.
- Prior to biopsy, you should report all medications that you are taking, including herbal supplements, and if you have any allergies. Your physician and/or nurse will advise you to stop taking aspirin, blood thinners or certain herbal supplements before the procedure to decrease your risk of bleeding. Also inform your doctor about recent illnesses or other medical conditions.
 - Following-number of days medications should be held:
 - Hold any anti-coagulants.
 - Hold Aspirin for 7 days
 - Hold Plavix for 5 days
 - Hold Coumadin for 3 days – a PT/INR is required within 24 hours prior to the procedure for any patient who has been taken Coumadin within the preceding week.
 - Hold AM dose of Lovenox/Fragmin the day of the procedure

What to expect during the test:

You will be awake during your biopsy and should have little discomfort. Many women report little or no pain and no scarring on the breast. However, certain patients, including those with dense breast tissue or abnormalities near the chest wall or behind the nipple may be more sensitive during the procedure.

Some women find that the major discomfort of the procedure is from lying on their stomach for the length of the procedure, which can be reduced by strategically placed cushions. Some women may also experience neck and/or back pain as the head is turned to the side when the breast is positioned for the biopsy.

When you receive the local anesthetic to numb the skin, you will feel a pin prick from the needle followed by a mild stinging sensation from the local anesthetic. You will likely feel some pressure when the biopsy needle is inserted and during tissue sampling, which is normal. The area will become numb within a few seconds.

You must remain very still while imaging and the biopsy are being performed. The doctor and the technologist will be talking to you the whole time to keep your mind off of the procedure. They will let you what they will be doing so you are not alarmed by anything- like when tissue samples are taken you may hear clicks or buzzing sounds from the biopsy device or if you may feel anything. These are all normal. The radiologist will take samples of the breast tissue using a vacuumed probe device. They'll remove several small tissue samples and send them to the pathology laboratory for testing. Once they are done sampling they will place a small clip into the breast where the biopsy was done, so it can be easily located again if more testing is needed.

After taking the samples, the doctor and/or nurse will apply pressure to the area to prevent bleeding and then cover it with sterile-strips and an op-site to keep it closed and prevent infection. Then the technologist will get 2 mammogram images to confirm that the marker is in the proper position.

How long does a stereotactic take?

Generally the biopsy is about 30minutes to an hour. This does not mean you will on the table this long. The time includes from the time of the consent, the technologist positioning you on the table, taking the images needed, to taking tissue samples, then the nurse holding pressure on the area for about 10-15 after the biopsy.

What to expect after the test?

You will be able to go home after your stereotactic biopsy.

Your test results will take about 5-7 days. To obtain your results, you will be contacted directly by the Women's Imaging Center or Radiologist and/or by your doctor as soon as your biopsy results are available.

Most women feel fine after a needle biopsy and are able to resume normal activity the day after the procedure is performed. We recommend that you carefully read and follow these instructions:

- To reduce bruising or swelling, we will give you an ice pack to place on the puncture site. Wear a bra and alternate the ice pack on/off for the next 6-8 hours.
- Do not remove the outer dressing for 24 hours. Leave Steri-strips in place until they fall off (about 5-7 days).
- Avoid getting puncture site wet for 24 hours.
- If you experience discomfort, you may take an over-the -counter pain reliever such as Tylenol.
- Do not take aspirin or aspirin products for 24 hours.
- Do not participate in strenuous activities for at least 24 hours.
- For other questions, refer to the discharge instructions given to you on the day of your procedure. Phone numbers will be provided for you.

Risks:

- There is a risk of bleeding and forming a hematoma, or a collection of blood at the biopsy site. The risk, however, appears to be less than one percent of patients. It will heal with time.
- Any procedure where the skin is penetrated carries a risk for infection. The chance of infection requiring antibiotic treatment appears to be less than one in 1,000.