

Breast Biopsies

You have a change on your mammogram or breast ultrasound and your radiologist has recommended a breast biopsy. Please stop by the 'Check Out' desk to schedule your biopsy. If you cannot schedule before leaving today, please call **(984)-974-8762** for an appointment. Biopsies are done in the UNC breast imaging clinic and require 1-1.5 hours of your time.

WHAT is a breast biopsy?

- A breast biopsy is a short procedure done by the breast radiologist who takes a very small piece (tissue sample) out of your breast.
- The tissue sample is sent to a pathology doctor who looks under a magnifying glass, a microscope, to see if the tissue is normal.
- You will be awake and able to talk to the team during the biopsy. You can go home after the biopsy.

WHY are breast biopsies done?

- A breast tissue sample is needed to see if your mammogram or ultrasound change is concerning.

HOW do you get ready for a breast biopsy?

Before the Biopsy

- Let the breast biopsy team know:
 - If you have ever had problems with bleeding during past biopsies or dental procedures.
 - If you take any blood thinning medicines (Aggrenox, Coumadin or Warfarin), Eliquis, Lovenox, Plavix, or Pradaxa). We may ask you and your primary provider if it is safe to stop these medications before your biopsy.
- When you arrive to clinic, the radiologist will discuss the steps of the biopsy, answer your questions, and get your written permission on a consent form to do the procedure.
- If you are planning to take any medication to reduce anxiety (worry) right before your biopsy, please tell the breast biopsy team BEFORE you sign the consent form. You will then need someone else to drive you home.
- Wearing loose fitting clothing and a supportive bra (sports bra) are recommended.
- Think about taking a shower or bath BEFORE the biopsy.
- You can eat and drink before the biopsy.

During the Biopsy

- You will lay on a table so the radiologist can see and safely get to the change in your breast.
- The skin on your breast will be cleaned with sterile soap before the biopsy.
- A very small needle will be used to numb the skin and breast. This medication can be uncomfortable at first, but after a few seconds you should not feel any pain. You will still feel pressure and that is normal.
- The radiologist will look at pictures of your breast to make sure the breast change is biopsied.

- A very small tissue sample will be taken out of your breast with a small needle. You will hear a noise (click or buzz) when the biopsy is being taken, and the radiologist will take 2-6 small samples.
- The tissue sample is placed into a jar labeled with your name and medical record number. This jar is sent to the pathology doctors who will look at the sample under the microscope.
- A very small and important metal biopsy clip will be placed in your breast to mark where the biopsy was done. It is very small, safe, and you can still go through airport security and MRI. It is less metal than a filling in your tooth.
- Firm pressure will be held over the breast after the biopsy to stop any possible bleeding.
- You will have a bandage placed on your breast, but you will NOT need stitches or sutures.
- A final mammogram will be used to show the metal biopsy clip is near the change in your breast.

After the Biopsy

- You will leave the clinic with a bandage and ice pack over your breast.
- You will be told how to take care of your breast.
- It is not necessary that someone drives you home, unless you took medication to lower your anxiety right before the biopsy.
- A black and blue mark (bruise) may happen after you go home and will eventually go away.
- A sore breast is normal after a biopsy. If your doctor is okay with you taking Tylenol, this is recommended for pain. Avoid pain medications that contain aspirin or ibuprofen.
- Keep the area clean and dry (no showers, baths, or swimming) for 48 hours.
- Do not lift anything heavier than a 2-liter soda bottle (5 pounds) for 48 hours.
- It may be most comfortable to wear a sports bra to sleep the first night.
- Watch for bleeding or signs of infection, like redness, swelling, or intense pain. If you have any of these signs, call your primary care provider or the breast imaging clinic Monday-Friday 8am-5pm at (984)-974-8762. If the office is closed, go to your nearest Urgent Care or Emergency Department.

BIOPSY RESULTS

- You can find out what your breast biopsy showed on **My Chart** in 3-5 days (mobile application or website – <https://myuncchart.org/MyChart/>).
- **If you do not feel comfortable getting your results from My Chart, please call your primary care provider or the UNC Breast Imaging Clinic at (984)-974-8762 if you have any questions.**

What happens AFTER my biopsy results?

- **Biopsies that are *benign*** (NOT cancer):
 - You may go back to screening mammograms in one year, or when you are due.
 - You may need a follow up mammogram, ultrasound or MRI to keep an eye on the change in your breast that was biopsied.
- **Biopsies that show *abnormal cells*** (atypia or high-risk) or **something that may keep growing**:
 - You may need to talk to a breast surgical provider about the need for surgery.
- **Biopsies that show *cancer*** (malignant):
 - You need to talk to a breast surgical provider about treatment you may need.
- **If you need to talk to a breast surgical provider, a surgery team member will call you to schedule an appointment.** If you have questions about a surgery appointment, please call (984)-974-8116.