

Ultrasound-Guided Core Needle Biopsy: What to expect

What is an ultrasound-guided breast biopsy?

An ultrasound guided core needle biopsy is a test performed on people of any gender to remove tissue from a lump in the breast or breast area.

1. The radiologist uses an ultrasound machine to see and guide the needle into the lump.
2. They take small pieces of tissue from the lump through the needle and send it to the pathologist to make a diagnosis.

Most lumps are benign (not cancer), but some lumps may be cancer.

A **radiologist** is a doctor who detects disease on medical images and performs tests using medical imaging.

A **pathologist** is a doctor who studies cells under a microscope to identify disease.

Figure 1: The doctor performs the ultrasound guided biopsy.



What can I expect during the biopsy?

- There is no radiation during the biopsy.
- You will lie on your back or side for the test.
- The entire appointment lasts about 2 hours.
- You will be awake during the test, but local numbing medicine is used to prevent pain.

How do I prepare for the biopsy?

- A Breast Imaging nurse will call you to discuss the test before your appointment.
- Make sure we have a list of your current medications and allergies.
- Continue to take your medications as usual, unless we or your doctor tell you different instructions.
- Wear a comfortable two-piece outfit to your appointment.
- Please bring a supportive bra to wear after the procedure; if you do not have/wear bras, we will provide a supportive wrap.
- Eat and drink normally on the day of the test.

What happens on the day of the biopsy?

1. After you arrive, you will talk with the nurse or radiologist and sign to agree to the test. We will answer any questions you have.
2. You will then lie on your back with your arm above your head. You will need to stay in this position for about 30 minutes.
3. We will clean your skin with a special soap and numb the skin and area around the lump with medication.
4. We will place the needle near the lump, and you will hear a click when the biopsy needle takes a sample (figure 2). Usually, we take 4-6 samples.
5. Finally, we place a tiny metal biopsy marker in the lump to show the doctors who will care for you in the future where the biopsy was done (figure 3). You will not be able to feel this marker. It is also safe in an MRI machine, and it will not set off any metal detectors.

Figure 2: This illustration shows the ultrasound probe guiding the biopsy needle in the area of concern.

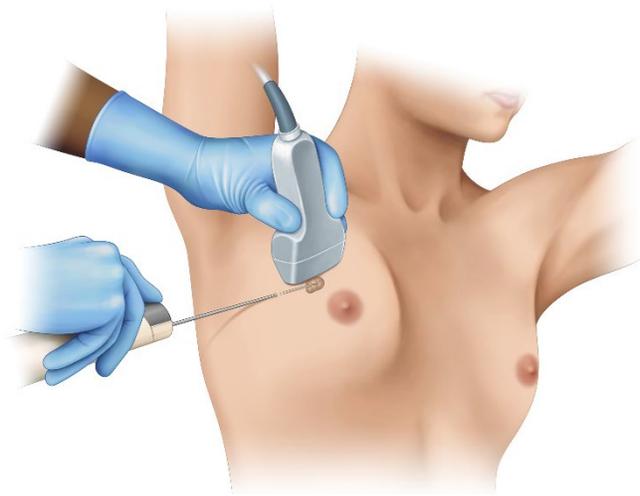
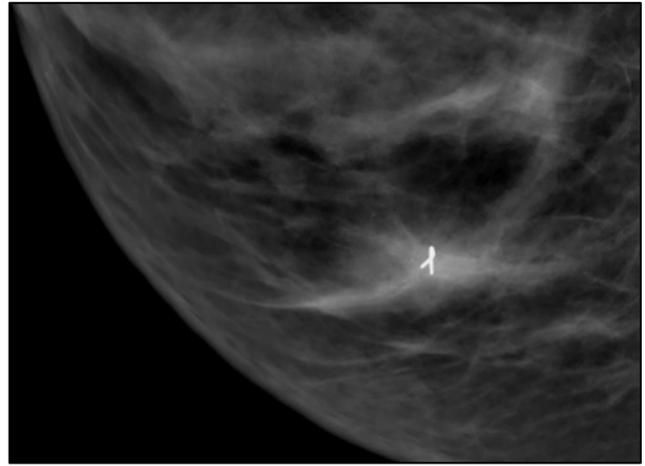


Figure 3: This mammogram shows the ribbon shaped marker in the breast after a biopsy. The marker is smaller than a grain of rice.



6. After the needle is removed, we will hold pressure over the area and place a bandage (figure 4).
7. Before you leave, we will take a mammogram (using less pressure than a routine mammogram) to show the biopsy marker. A **mammogram** is an x-ray picture of the breast.
8. You will stay for 1 hour after the test to be checked by the nurse to make sure you are doing well before you leave.

Figure 4: You will have a bandage over a very small incision (no stitches).



What happens after the biopsy when I go home?

- You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or use ice packs for pain if needed.
- Do not lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk (about 9 pounds) or participate in strenuous exercise for 24-48 hours after the biopsy.
- Do not take a bath, swim, or go in a hot tub for 10 days after the biopsy. You may shower the morning after the biopsy.
- We, or your personal doctor, will call you when we get your results from the pathologist, usually within 2-3 business days.

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