

Sterotactic Breast Biopsy Q & A

Your doctor has recommended that you have a stereotactic breast biopsy. This technique is an alternative to surgical biopsy that is less invasive and allows a more rapid recovery.

*We hope the information provided here will help you understand what to expect of the procedure. If you have additional questions, please contact your doctor or the Kapi'olani Women's Center at **973-5967**.*

WHY A STEREOTACTIC BIOPSY?

By now your physician has explained to you that your mammogram has revealed an abnormality in your breast. In the past, many patients with breast abnormalities underwent surgery to remove "sample" tissue from the site. Since most (about 80 percent) of breast abnormalities are benign and present no health risk, the stereotactic non-surgical biopsy was developed to offer patients a less invasive alternative.

HOW IS THE TEST PERFORMED?

The biopsy is performed by a physician with help from a radiologic technologist. Before you arrive, the physician will have studied your mammogram to become familiar with the location of the abnormality. Here is what you can expect:

- Prior to day of the procedure, you will be contacted to review your medical history and current medications.
- The day of the procedure, you will have an opportunity to talk with the physician who will be performing the procedure.
- After checking in you will be asked to undress from the waist up and be given a robe to wear.
- The technologist will ask you to lie on your stomach on the examination table. Your breast will then be positioned through a special opening in the table.
- Your breast will be compressed as it would be for a mammogram. A confirming x-ray is taken to ensure that the breast containing the abnormality is positioned correctly.

- Using this information, the physician will then position the instrument containing the biopsy needle.
- The physician will numb the skin with a local anesthetic. This will be done with a very tiny needle.
- After taking a final set of x-rays to ensure placement, the physician will ask you to hold still while the needle is inserted to obtain tissue samples. After several samples have been taken, the physician will remove the needle.
- For future reference, a small stainless steel or titanium marker will be placed on your breast at the biopsy site.
- A dressing will be applied to the biopsy site.

WILL THE PROCEDURE HURT?

Because the physician uses a local anesthetic, you likely will experience only a small amount of discomfort during the procedure. However, individuals do have different pain thresholds. Some patients report that the procedure feels similar to having an ear pierced or being snapped with a rubber band.

DO I NEED TO PREPARE FOR THE BIOPSY?

During the seven days prior to your procedure and day of procedure, avoid aspirin, medication containing aspirin, and any kind of blood thinners. Do not wear any powders, lotions or scented products. Additionally, we request you avoid alcohol 24 hours prior to your appointment.

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WILL I BE ABLE TO RESUME ACTIVITIES RIGHT AWAY?

After your dressing is in place, you may get dressed. Most women feel fine after the procedure and immediately return to their normal routines; however, we recommend that you avoid strenuous exercise or activity for at least 24 hours

IS SPECIAL CARE REQUIRED AFTER THE BIOPSY?

You will be given instructions for biopsy aftercare. These instructions will be specific to your individual case. You will be called by the Kapi'olani Women's Center the next business day after the procedure.

WHEN CAN I EXPECT THE BIOPSY RESULTS?

The physician performing the biopsy will send your tissue sample to a pathologist who will look at it under a microscope. The results will be available to your referring physician in one to two business days. In most cases, your physician will contact you to discuss your results.

IS THE COST COVERED BY MY HEALTH INSURANCE?

Check with your health insurance provider to verify your coverage and to see if pre-authorization is required.

WHERE WILL THE PROCEDURE TAKE PLACE?

Your breast biopsy will be performed at the Kapi'olani Women's Center at 1907 South Beretania Street on the 5th floor. Parking is free. Enter the parking lot from Artesian Street and park on the 2nd floor—levels are marked as "Guest Parking."

