

After your breast core biopsy

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

This leaflet is designed to give you information about aftercare following a core biopsy of the breast. We hope it will answer some of the questions that you or those who care for you may have. This leaflet is not meant to replace the consultation between you and your medical team but aims to help you understand more about what is discussed.

Care of dressings

The dressing you have over your biopsy site will help to prevent bleeding and bruising later on. It is important that you keep the dressing dry. Avoid showering over the area for the first 48 hours; you may have a shallow bath. The dressing can be removed 48 hours after your biopsy. You may find it easier to do this by soaking it off in the shower.

Bruising

When the local anaesthetic has worn off, it is common to have some bruising and discomfort for a couple of days. In a small number of cases, the bruising may be significant (please see section below "Is there anything I need to look out for?").

Wearing a well-fitting supportive bra, such as a sports bra, for the first 48 hours after your biopsy may help reduce any discomfort.

Pain

If you have any pain or discomfort, you can take paracetamol to relieve this, following the instructions on the packet. Do not take aspirin, as this could cause further bleeding. If you are taking blood-thinning medications (such as warfarin), please contact your anticoagulant clinic for further advice.

Other risks

There is a small risk of infection when a needle passes through the skin. There is also a small chance that it is not possible to get the tissue sample that has been planned. In this case, the wider care team (known as a multi-disciplinary team) will discuss what to do next. Another attempt at a biopsy or surgery may be needed.

Is there anything I need to watch out for at home?

If you notice that the wound is bleeding, or the bruise is visibly growing, press hard on the area for 10 minutes. If this does not stop the bleeding or if the bruise continues to get bigger, contact the breast care nurse team, your own GP or your nearest A&E department. If you take blood-thinning medications (such as warfarin), please contact your anticoagulant clinic for advice.

If you experience chest pain or shortness of breath, contact your GP or nearest A&E department as soon as possible.

When can I get back to normal?

You should be able to get back to your normal activities, such as driving or going to work, immediately after your appointment. However, we advise you to avoid strenuous exercise or heavy lifting for 48 hours after the procedure. You need to keep the dressing dry for 48 hours after application, so you can have a shallow bath but need to avoid showering during this time.

When will I get the results?

You will be given an appointment to discuss the results of your biopsy with the breast surgical team, this may be a telephone appointment. You will get the results of your biopsy within 10 days to two weeks, as the tissue sample requires careful preparation before it can be examined under the microscope and the results discussed at the weekly breast multi-disciplinary team meeting.

Who do I contact for more help or information?

It is very important that all of your questions about the biopsy procedure are answered and that you have all the information you need about your care. Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust has a Macmillan Navigator Service for access to the clinical nurse specialist and other members of the clinical team. Navigators can also help with queries and provide a range of other information, help and support relating to your care.

The service is available Monday to Friday 08.30- 16.30 (excluding bank holidays).

Telephone: 020 3313 0303

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777**. You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, Fourth Floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

Breast services
Published: October 2023
Review date: October 2026
Reference no: 5209
© Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust