

Breast services

After your vacuum assisted core biopsy of the breast

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

This leaflet is designed to give you information about aftercare following a vacuum assisted core biopsy of the breast. We hope it will answer the questions that you or those important to 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 prevent bleeding and bruising after the biopsy.

It is important that you keep the dressing dry. So, you may have a shallow bath but should avoid showering over the area for the first 48 hours. This is to minimise the risk of infection.

You can remove the dressing 48 hours after your biopsy. You may find it easier to do this by soaking it off in the shower.

Bruising and discomfort

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

You may experience pain or discomfort when the local anaesthetic has worn off. You can take paracetamol to relieve this. Make sure you follow the instructions on the packet.

Do not take aspirin, as this could cause further bleeding. If you take blood-thinning medications (such as warfarin), please contact your anticoagulant clinic for further advice if necessary.

Other risks

There is a small risk of infection when a needle passes through the skin.

Sometimes it may not be possible to obtain the sample. If this happens, you may need to have another biopsy or surgery.

Is there anything I need to look 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 doesn't stop the bleeding or if the bruise continues to get bigger, please contact the breast clinic if it is during working hours. (Breast clinic: 020 3313 0477, Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 17:00). If bleeding occurs out of hours, please attend A&E.

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, attend your nearest A&E department as soon as possible.

When can I get back to normal?

You should be able to resume your normal activities, such as driving or going back 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 get the results of your biopsy about 10 to 14 days after the procedure. The tissue sample needs careful preparation before it can be examined under the microscope. The results then need to be discussed at the weekly breast multi-disciplinary team meeting.

How 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.

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** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). 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

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