

Core Needle Breast Biopsy: Before Your Procedure

As you get ready for your core needle breast biopsy, you may have questions about what will happen during the procedure and how to prepare.

Here's some information to help you know what to expect.

A core needle breast biopsy is a procedure to take one or more samples of tissue from the breast to check for breast cancer or to get more information about the tissue.

It's done to check a lump or a suspicious area in the breast that may have been found during a breast exam, mammogram, ultrasound, or MRI.

The biopsy samples are then sent to a lab where a doctor will examine them.

Before the biopsy, you'll take off your clothes above the waist and remove any jewelry.

And you'll be given an exam gown to wear.

Next, the doctor or nurse will help you get comfortable on the exam table.

You may be seated or lying on your back or side.

Or you may lie on your stomach on a special table that has an opening for your breasts.

The doctor or nurse will clean the area of your breast where the biopsy will be done.

After you are positioned and your skin has been cleaned, the doctor will give you a shot of medicine to numb the biopsy area.

Next the doctor will make a small cut, called an incision, in your skin and insert a needle with a special hollow tip.

You may feel some pressure on your breast while this is done.

The doctor will then use the needle to take samples of tissue.

During the procedure, the doctor may use ultrasound, X-ray, or MRI to help guide the placement of the biopsy needle.

After the samples have been collected, the doctor may place a tiny marker in your breast tissue at the biopsy site.

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Now you won't be able to feel or see the marker after it is placed.

But the marker will be visible in mammograms, ultrasounds, and MRIs of your breast.

This will show the area that was biopsied when you have breast imaging in the future.

When the procedure is finished, the doctor will cover the area with a bandage.

The incision is small enough that you won't need stitches.

Your doctor may get some results right away after your breast biopsy.

But it can take up to 2 weeks to get the final results.

Follow your doctor's directions for preparing for your procedure, including what you can eat or drink and which medicines to take.

And be sure to bring your photo ID, health insurance card, and any paperwork that your doctor's office may have asked for.

Having a breast biopsy can be stressful.

But knowing what to expect and how to prepare can help.

And remember, you can always call your doctor if you have questions or concerns.