

Stereotactic Breast Biopsy



Stereotactic breast biopsy is done to take out tiny pieces of the changed breast tissue for testing. This procedure is done with a special mammogram machine that uses X-rays to find the tissue to be removed. It may keep you from needing an open (surgical) biopsy.

Before the procedure

- Tell your healthcare provider if you are or may be pregnant.
- Tell your healthcare provider what medicines you take. This includes all prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin and ibuprofen. It also includes street drugs, marijuana, and any herbs, vitamins, or supplements. Ask if and when you should stop taking them.
- Tell your healthcare provider about any allergies you have.
- Wear a comfortable bra and a top that's easy to take off.
- Bathe before the procedure. Don't wear perfume, deodorant, antiperspirant, lotion, powder, or any other substance on your skin.
- Try to empty your bladder before the procedure to help you be more comfortable on the table.

During the procedure

- You undress from the waist up and put on a medical gown that opens in the front.
- The position you will be in depends on the safest and easiest way to reach the changed breast tissue. It will also depend on the type of machine used to do the biopsy. You may sit up, lie face down, or lie on your side for this procedure. Your breast is placed in an opening in the table.
- The skin on your breast is cleansed and numbed. You will be awake during the biopsy. You will feel the needle when the numbing medicine is put in your breast.
- Your breast is pressed between 2 flat plates and a low-dose X-ray is taken. (This is a lot like getting a mammogram.) A computer uses the X-rays to find the exact tissue to be sampled. You will have to be very still while this is done. You may be asked to hold your breath for a short time.
- A small cut is made in your skin. A hollow needle is then put in through the cut and guided to the changed tissue inside your breast. You may feel pressure from the needle, but it shouldn't hurt. More X-rays may be done to be sure it's in the right place. The needle is then used to take out 3 to 12 tiny samples of the breast tissue.
- Sometimes a tiny metal marker is put into the biopsy site to help find the area on future exams. An X-ray is usually done to make sure the marker has been put in the correct position. You can't see or feel the marker.
- After the needle is removed, a small bandage is placed on the skin. Stitches are seldom needed. Pressure may be put on the area to help reduce bruising and bleeding.
- You can get dressed and go home soon after the procedure is finished.



After the procedure

- Don't do any physical work or strenuous activity for the first 24 hours after the procedure. You can likely return to your normal routine after this brief period of rest.
- Ask how long you should use a waterproof ice pack over the biopsy area, when your bandage can be taken off, and when you can take medicine, including aspirin, again.
- You may have a bruise for a few weeks. This is normal. You may also have a tiny scar.
- If you have fever, a lot of bleeding, swelling, or other problems, call your healthcare provider.
- Ask your healthcare provider when you will get the results of the biopsy and who will explain them to you.

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.