



Stereotactic Breast Biopsy

ABOUT THIS TEST

Stereotactic Breast Biopsy: About This Test

What is it?

Stereotactic breast biopsy is a test that uses X-ray imaging to find an area of your breast where a tissue sample will be taken. The sample is looked at under a microscope to check for signs of breast cancer.

Why is this test done?

This type of breast biopsy is usually done to check for cancer in a lump found during a mammogram.

How can you prepare for the test?

Talk to your doctor about all your health conditions before the test. For example, tell your doctor if you:

- Are taking any medicines.
- Are allergic to any medicines.
- Are allergic to latex.
- Have any bleeding problems or take blood thinners, such as aspirin, heparin, warfarin (Coumadin), enoxaparin sodium (Lovenox), or clopidogrel bisulfate (Plavix).
- Are or might be pregnant.
- Have a problem with lying on your stomach for 30 to 40 minutes.

What happens before the test?

- You will take off your clothing above the waist. A paper or cloth gown will cover your shoulders.
- Your skin is washed with a special soap.
- You will be given a shot of medicine to numb the biopsy area on your breast.
- Images are taken to find the exact site for the biopsy.

What happens during the test?

- You will lie on your stomach on a table that has a hole for your breast to hang through.
- Once the area in your breast is numb, a small cut (incision) is made in the skin.
- Using the imaging, the doctor will guide the needle into the biopsy area.
- A sample of breast tissue is taken through the needle.
- A small clip is usually inserted into your breast to mark the biopsy site.
- The needle is removed and pressure put on the needle site to stop any bleeding.
- A bandage is put on the needle site.

What else should you know about the test?

- The small cut for the needle does not usually need stitches.

How long does the test take?

- The test will take about 60 minutes. Most of the time is spent preparing for the images and finding the area for the biopsy.

What happens after the test?

- You will probably be able to go home right away.
- You can go back to your usual activities right away.
- Wear a firm bra after the surgery for a few days. The support will help limit bruising.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to keep a list of the medicines you take. Ask your doctor when you can expect to have your test results.