

Fine Needle Aspiration Biopsy

What to Expect



What is Fine Needle Aspiration Biopsy?

A **fine needle aspiration biopsy** is the fastest and easiest method of breast biopsy. A thin needle is used to remove a sample of cells or fluid from the suspicious breast lump. The sample is examined under a microscope to look for abnormal cells, or signs of disease, cancer or infection.

What Should I Expect?

Before the Fine Needle Biopsy

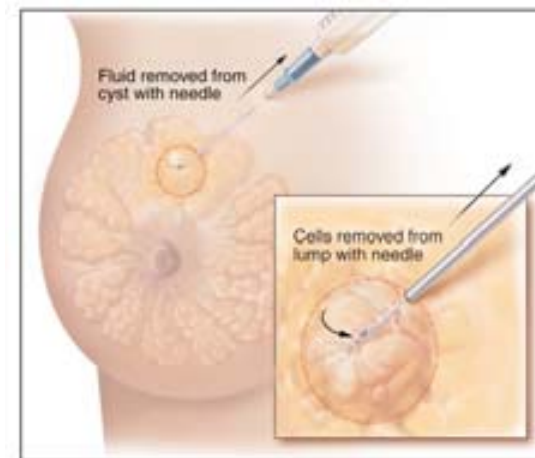
1. If you are taking aspirin or medicine that thins the blood, tell your doctor
2. On the day of the biopsy:
 - Eat a light meal
 - Wear comfortable two-piece clothing
 - Do not use lotion, deodorant or perfume under arms or breasts

During the Fine Needle Biopsy

- The doctor will have you sit or lie down and position yourself so that he or she has easy access to the breast lump.
- The skin of the breast will be cleaned and the area will be numbed by a local anesthetic (numbing medicine).
- When the area is numb, a thin, hollow needle will be inserted through the skin, and tissue or fluid will be taken out for examination.
- If the lump in the breast cannot be felt, an ultrasound or a CT(computed tomography) scan may be used to help the doctor guide the needle to the exact biopsy location.

After the Fine Needle Biopsy

A small bandage is placed over the area. A small number of people will feel tenderness and have some bruising. But most people can return to their normal daily activities after a fine needle biopsy.



Source: National Cancer Institute

Common Questions

How long will it take?

A fine needle biopsy generally takes a few minutes. If an ultrasound or CT scan is needed, it takes about 30 to 90 minutes. You should get your biopsy results from your doctor 7 to 10 days after the biopsy.

Will it hurt?

You may feel a pinch, pressure, or nothing at all during the biopsy. A few people may have tenderness or bruising afterwards, which can be relieved by putting an ice pack to the breast. If you feel any pain during or after the biopsy, tell your doctor right away.

Are there any complications?

Complications from a fine needle biopsy are rare. The most common problem is bleeding from the area where the needle was put in. Pressure is usually applied to stop the bleeding and a bandage is put on. If cancer cells are present, there is a very small chance of the cancer spreading but this is rare.