

Having an Ultrasound-guided Breast Biopsy

You are having an ultrasound-guided breast biopsy. This means taking one or more samples of tissue to be examined by the laboratory.

This sheet tells you what to expect. We review this in more detail before the procedure. You can ask any questions at that time.

Who does the biopsy

A radiologist (a doctor who specializes in medical imaging) does the biopsy. You might also meet a sonographer, nurse, or support aide.

Our team can be male, female, or gender diverse. If you prefer a specific gender or you would like a hospital chaperone, please tell the booking clerk when scheduling the appointment. We can try to accommodate your request.

About your appointment

Please **arrive at least 30 minutes early**. Give yourself time to find parking and check in at Medical Imaging before your appointment time.

Bring with you government-issued photo identification and your BC Services Card (personal health number).

The biopsy will take at least 60 minutes. It could take longer. It depends on how many areas we are looking to biopsy.

If you cannot keep the appointment, let us know as soon as possible. We will try to reschedule you.

If you are late, we might have to reschedule you for another day.

If you do not speak or understand English well enough to have medical conversations, please tell the booking clerk when scheduling the appointment. We can arrange for a medical interpreter. You do not pay for this.

Bringing a support person

You are welcome to bring a support person with you. They can be with you before and after the biopsy. They can listen with you to instructions for care at home. For safety reasons, they **cannot** be in the room during the ultrasound.

If you need a support person during the scan, please speak to the Receptionist or sonographer.

Please arrange childcare for your children.

Do not bring children with you, unless the child is the one with the appointment. We do not have anyone to look after children and they cannot come into the procedure room with you.

Your ultrasound scan and biopsy results

The doctor who ordered the biopsy and your family doctor both receive a report of the procedure from Medical Imaging.

Both doctors receive the results of the biopsy from the laboratory. This can take 7 to 10 days. Make an appointment with the doctor to review the results.

We do not allow anyone to take pictures or videos during the scan. If you want a copy of the images or the results, please ask at Reception about how to do this.

Preparing for the biopsy

Wear a top that you can easily take off.

Please do not wear and use any deodorant, lotions, or powder on or near the breast and underarm.

We suggest you have something to eat and drink of water or juice beforehand.

You might want to take plain acetaminophen (Tylenol or store brand) 30 minutes before your appointment, except if you have a medical reason where you can't take this medicine.

Arrange for someone to drive you home if your doctor has asked you to take a sedative before the biopsy.

Before the biopsy

We do the following:

- Ask you to undress from the waist up and put on a hospital gown.
- Review the procedure and answer any questions.
- Ask you to read and sign a consent form for the procedure.
- Might do a regular ultrasound scan of the area to confirm the location for the biopsy.

During the biopsy

You lie on your back or slightly turned onto one side. We do our best to keep you covered as much as possible during the biopsy.

The radiologist does the following:

- Cleans the skin.
- Injects numbing medicine to “freeze” the skin over area.
- Might make a small cut in the skin.
- Inserts a biopsy needle. You might feel some pressure as it goes in.
- Guides the needle to the area(s).
- Collects tissue samples. You might hear a clicking sound as the samples are taken.
- Might place a small titanium marker* at the biopsy site.
- Remove the needle and put pressure over the area to stop any bleeding.
- Place a small bandage over the area.
- Might place a small ice pack over the area.

*The **titanium marker** points to the area in case you need surgery. The marker stays in your breast even if you don’t need surgery. It will help find the area in the future. The marker does not interfere with MRI scans or airport security.

Care at home

Before you leave, we review how to care for yourself at home. These instructions help manage pain and prevent any bleeding or infection.

The freezing lasts for about 2 hours. Expect your breast to be tender and a little swollen for a few days. This is normal.

You can return to work the day of the biopsy as long as you can check the bandage regularly for bleeding and your job does not involve any heavy lifting.

For the **first 24 hours** after the biopsy:

- Wear a supportive bra.
- Place an ice pack over the area for 15 minutes at a time 4 or more times a day.
- Take plain acetaminophen (Tylenol or store brand) for pain.
- Do not do any strenuous activities or exercise.
- Do not lift or carry anything over 4.5 kg (10 lbs).
- Do not shower or take a bath.

For the **first 3 days** after the biopsy:

- Do not go swimming or soak in a hot tub.

Locations

Abbotsford Regional Hospital	604-851-4866
BC Women's Hospital	604-875-2156
BC Cancer Agency	604-877-6000
Burnaby Hospital	604-434-4211
Chilliwack General Hospital	604-795-4122
Delta Hospital	604-946-1121
Eagle Ridge Hospital	604-469-3172
Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre	604-533-3308 Ext. 63926
Langley Memorial Hospital	604-533-6405
Lions Gate Hospital	604-984-5775
Mount Saint Joseph Hospital	604-877-8323
Peace Arch Hospital	604-535-4510
Powell River General Hospital	604-485-3282
Richmond Hospital	604-244-5104
Ridge Meadows Hospital	604-463-1800
Royal Columbian Hospital	604-520-4640
Sechelt Hospital	604-885-8608
Squamish Hospital	604-892-6025
St. Paul's Hospital	604-806-8006
Surrey Memorial Hospital	604-588-3308
UBC Hospital	604-822-7076
Vancouver General Hospital	604-875-4111 Ext. 68612