



# What is a Core Biopsy?

[www.bcwomens.ca](http://www.bcwomens.ca)

A core biopsy involves a doctor placing a needle into your breast to remove a small sample of tissue. Ultrasound or stereotactic digital mammography are used to place the needle in the area of interest.

The Radiologist will decide which method is to be used and how many samples are needed depending on each woman's individual circumstances. The biopsy site is then marked with a tiny metallic clip which stays in your breast. This clip is made of titanium which does not cause any breast changes, set off airport alarms, or interfere with other tests.

## Why is a core biopsy done?

The purpose of a core biopsy is to remove small pieces of tissue from the area of the breast being checked.

The breast tissue is then studied under a microscope by a pathologist (a specially trained doctor).

This test can help doctors find out the nature of the breast changes.

## How long will the core biopsy take?

If the test is done using mammography it may take 1-1½ hours. Your breast will be compressed for at least 30 minutes. Everything will be done to keep you as comfortable as possible. If the test is done using ultrasound, it may take up to half an hour.

### What we need to know about you

Some medications may cause additional bleeding our Breast Health Program nurse will call you at least a week before your appointment.

#### *Please tell her if you:*

- ▶ are taking blood thinners such as warfarin, coumadin, aspirin, or heparin.
- ▶ have any bleeding disorders or any other serious health problems.
- ▶ have allergies or previous reactions to medications, local anaesthetics (freezing), steristrips, or tapes.
- ▶ have difficulty lying in one position for 30-45 minutes.

Do not take Vitamin E or garlic tablets for 5 days before and 2 days after your biopsy. If you regularly take anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen (advil), naproxen please discuss with the Breast Clinic nurse.

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## Will I need anaesthetic?

This procedure is done under local anaesthetic (freezing).

## Is any preparation necessary?

### *We recommend you*

- ▶ eat and drink as per routine
- ▶ do not use any talcum powder, body lotions, creams, perfumes or deodorants on or near the breast area before your biopsy
- ▶ wear a 2 piece outfit
- ▶ bring or wear a comfortable, supportive bra

## Will there be any side effects?

Some bruising or swelling is common.

If the area is uncomfortable after the biopsy, it is recommended that you take Tylenol.

Cold packs and pressure applied to the area can also help to ease any discomfort and reduce bruising.

## Will the core biopsy leave a scar?

A very fine scar (less than 5mm) may be left. This is likely to fade in time.

## When will the test results be available?

Results will be available from your family doctor in 5-7 working days.

### **What if I need more information?**

If you have any questions or concerns  
please contact our nurse at:  
**604-875-2107.**