

# Taking a sample of your breast tissue with an MRI scan (MRI guided breast biopsy)

Department of Radiology

Information for Patients

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## Introduction

If you are an outpatient please read your appointment letter carefully to check which hospital your appointment is at. This leaflet tells you about your examination. Please read it carefully as it contains instructions and important information.

## Why do I need a breast biopsy?

You will have had a scan that has shown an area of breast tissue that needs looking at more closely. Your doctor has asked for you to have a biopsy.

Having a biopsy taken is less invasive than having surgery to take tissue samples.

## What is a MRI guided breast biopsy?

When you have a biopsy, a special hollow needle is put into the area of breast tissue where the samples are to be taken from. Vacuum pressure is used to suck small tissue samples through the hollow needle into a sample pot. The samples are then sent off to be tested. We use MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) to guide the biopsy if the area cannot be seen on other scans, such as ultrasound or CT.

## How long will it take?

Your appointment will take about 1 and a half hours (90 minutes).

Most of this time is taken in getting all the scan pictures and getting everything set up and ready to take the biopsy. Taking the biopsy samples only takes a few minutes.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

## Important information

Before your MRI scan we need to check if anything about you could be affected by the scan.

**You must tell us if you have any of the following**, by calling the telephone number on your appointment letter. If you are staying in hospital as an inpatient, please ask staff on your ward to phone the MRI scan room:

- If you have a pacemaker or internal defibrillator.
- If you have ever had any metal fragments in your eyes.
- If you have any implants or surgical clips in your body or head.
- If you have ever had an operation on your head, eyes, ears, heart or chest.
- If there is any chance that you are pregnant.
- If you have had an operation in the last 6 weeks.
- If you have a cochlear implant.

If you have been sent a safety questionnaire with your appointment letter, please fill it in and bring it with you.

### If you have a drug patch on your skin:

If you have a stick-on drug patch for pain medicine, hormones, nicotine or other medicine, this will need to be removed before having your MRI scan. This is because the patch may warm up or get hot during the scan. This can change the amount of the drug being given to you.

Once a drug patch is removed it will not re-attach to the skin. If you need your drug-patch all the time, please bring a new patch with you so you can put it on after the MRI scan is completed.

If your drug patch is applied by a nurse at home please tell the nurse that you will need a new drug patch after your MRI appointment. They can then arrange to visit you at home to apply a new one.

### If you have a glucose monitor and/or an insulin pump on your skin:

**If you use a glucose sensor** (flash monitor or continuous glucose monitor (CGM)), which attaches to the surface of your skin, this will need to be removed for your MRI scan. Please bring a replacement to your appointment so you can apply it after your scan. **Or**, you can contact us to change your appointment so it ties in with when you are due to replace your sensor.

**If you have an insulin pump with tubing**, you will need to remove the pump before the scan can be performed. The pump can be reattached as soon as the scan is over.

**If you have a patch pump**, such as an Omnipod, you will need to remove the Pod and keep your Personal Diabetes Manager (PDM) outside of the room with your belongings. Please bring a new Pod to apply after the scan.

## Asking for your permission (consent)

The doctor who referred you should have talked to you about the reasons for this procedure and any other options.

You have been referred to a doctor who specialises in imaging and X-ray treatments (a radiologist) for this procedure. They will confirm that you understand:

- why the procedure is being done
- the potential risks
- the chances of success

You will sign a consent form to confirm this. **You should feel that you have had enough explanation before you sign the consent form.** You will be given a copy of the consent form.

If after talking to the hospital doctor or Radiologist you do not want to have the procedure then you can decide against it at any time.

If the Radiologist feels that your condition has changed they will talk to you about whether the procedure is still needed. They may then ask you to return to your referring doctor for review.

If you feel during the procedure that you do not want it to continue we will explain the implications of not doing so to help you fully decide.

## How do I get ready for my scan and biopsy?

**Please bring any sprays or inhalers** that you are taking with you to the appointment.

**Medication from your doctor** should be taken as usual unless it is blood thinning medication and you have been told not to take it.

A member of staff will talk to you about the MRI scan. They will ask you to complete a safety questionnaire before starting the scan if you have not already done so.

It is helpful to wear clothes which do not have metal zips or clips.

Before the scan you will need to take off all loose metal objects, including:

- watch, activity tracker, mobile phone, money, credit cards, keys, glasses
- all jewellery (including piercings) - metal piercings can be replaced with plastic piercings before coming for your scan.
- hair clips and grips, wigs, hair pieces, weaves or extensions
- eye makeup, fake eyelashes
- sports clothing that contains silver fibres
- stick-on drug patches - see more information above
- diabetic monitoring device - see more information above

If you have a fear of confined spaces (claustrophobia) please tell us when you arrive. Most people who are anxious about the scan are able to manage it with support from our staff.

## What happens during the procedure?

When you get to the Radiology Department you may be asked to change into a hospital gown.

- You will be taken to the MRI scanner.
- A radiographer or assistant practitioner (an AP) who is trained in doing MRI scans will talk to you about the scan and check your questionnaire. You may ask them any questions about the scan. You will be awake for the scan and biopsy.
- We will ask you to take off your clothes above your waist and put on a hospital gown.
- You will have an MRI scan. This will be like your previous MRI scan.
- You will have an injection of a clear liquid (contrast liquid) that shows up on MRI scans. This will be in a vein in your arm. The contrast makes it easier to see the area that needs the biopsy taken from.
- It is very important for you to keep as still as possible. This is so that the position of the area that needs to have the biopsy does not change.
- During the procedure a piece of equipment will be attached to the MRI table. This will push down on your breast so you will feel some compression. This holds your breast in position so it does not move during the biopsy. It will also be used to guide the biopsy needle to the correct area in your breast.
- Your skin and deeper breast tissues will be numbed with a local anaesthetic. When the local anaesthetic is injected it will sting to start with, but this will soon wear off, and the skin and deeper tissues should then feel numb.
- When the area is numb the radiologist will make a small cut in your skin. This makes it easier for the biopsy needle to go through your skin.
- The radiologist will move the needle to the correct position.
- You will have a short scan to check the position of the biopsy needle in your breast.
- When the biopsy needle is in the right place, the radiologist will take a biopsy sample.
- More biopsy samples may be taken if needed. This is to help make sure we get a good sample.
- Your biopsy samples will be sent to the laboratory to be examined.

## Is there anything else I need to know?

During the procedure a very small metal marker clip is placed in the site of the biopsy.

If the area turns out to be cancerous or pre-cancerous and needs an operation to take it out, the clip allows the same area to easily be found again. It also allows the same area to be found with other forms of imaging, such as a mammography or ultrasound.

The clip is about 2mm in size and is made of titanium (the same material that many artificial joints are made from). It will cause you no problems or side effects. It will not set off alarms at airports and can safely stay in your breast permanently.

## What happens after the procedure?

When the biopsy is completed a member of staff will press firmly over the wound until bleeding has stopped.

A wound dressing will be put on your skin where the needle went in.

You will stay in the department for 30 minutes to rest.

You will then go to the Breast Care Centre to have a mammogram X-ray.

You will be given an information leaflet with instructions about aftercare before you go home.

## What aftercare advice should I follow when I get home?

- Keep the wound dressing in place and keep it dry for 24 hours.
- Avoid strenuous activity or heavy lifting.
- You will be able to drive the same day
- Try to rest for 24 hours.
- If you have any bleeding at the biopsy site, apply firm pressure over the dressing until it stops.
- If narrow adhesive strips (steri-strips) have been put on the wound, do not take them off as it may open the wound.
- Instructions about your aftercare will be given to you after the biopsy.

## How do I get my results?

It can take up to 2 weeks to get the results from your biopsy samples.

A letter will be sent to you with details of an appointment where you will be given your results.

## Are there any risks from having a biopsy?

- **Bruising** - after the biopsy it is usual to develop some bruising.
- **Bleeding** - there is risk of bleeding in the breast tissue. The risk of this is 1 in every 100 people (1%). If this happens you may need an operation to stop the bleeding.
- **Pain** - when the local anaesthetic wears off after a few hours, the area may feel sore. You can take a normal dose of your usual painkiller. **Do not take aspirin** as this may increase the chance of bleeding and bruising.
- **Scarring** - there will be a small scar.

## Are there any risks from having an MRI scan?

The use of magnetic fields from MRI scans is not thought to be harmful.

There is a very small risk of side effects from the contrast liquid injection, but this is extremely rare. These are usually mild and may include itchy skin, pain at the injection site and sometimes feeling sick (nausea) and vomiting. Headache and chest pain are rare. If you do have any side effects please tell MRI staff straight away.

## What if I need to talk to someone?

If you have any questions or concerns:

- Please call the Breast Care Nurses on **0116 250 2513**.

Monday to Thursday - 9am to 4.30pm

Friday - 9am to 4pm

An answer phone service is available outside these hours, but messages will only be listened to during working hours.

If you need advice outside these hours, please contact:

- your GP.
- NHS helpline non-emergency number - **111** (available 24 hours a day).
- Ward 23A - **0116 250 2490** (available 24 hours a day).

If you cannot make the appointment:

- Please call the radiology department on **0116 258 8765** and select **option 2**.  
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, excluding bank holidays.



اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

Previous reference:

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email [equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)