

Radiology Department

Stereo Vacuum Assisted Biopsy

What is a Vacuum Assisted Biopsy?

A vacuum assisted biopsy is performed in order to obtain a sample of your breast tissue for diagnosis.

There is no special preparation prior to this examination, and you may eat and drink normally.

What happens during the Vacuum Assisted Biopsy?

- You will be in the Breast Unit for approximately 1 hour from when your procedure starts.
- Once in the x-ray room you will be asked to sit or lay on your side. The radiographer will position your breast into the x-ray machine, in much the same way as you were positioned for your mammogram (breast x-ray).
- A local anaesthetic is used to numb the area.
- A special piece of equipment is used to remove the small amount of breast tissue which is required for further examination. After the procedure, a light dressing will be applied. It may be helpful if you wear a supporting bra. You may remove the dressing after 48 hours.
- X-rays will be taken during the procedure, to ensure accuracy when obtaining the small amount of breast tissue required.
- A tiny metallic clip may be inserted at the biopsy site if the doctor thinks this will be helpful. This will stay in the breast forever and will show up if you have another mammogram or a chest x-ray. It will not set off alarms at airports or prevent you from having an MRI scan.

Are there any after effects?

- The breast may be bruised and you may experience some discomfort within your breast.
- This can be relieved by taking some painkillers, this will be discussed at the procedure. We do not recommend a painkiller containing aspirin as this can make the bruising worse. Paracetamol is suitable for most people.
- It is recommended that you do not do any strenuous activity or heaving lifting for 48 hours.
- It is advisable not to drive for at least an hour after the procedure.

What happens next?

The specimen will be sent to the pathology department, and the results will be explained to you the following week. Before you leave the department you will be given an appointment to come back and receive your results.

If you have any questions please call us on 01603 286435, Monday –Thursday 9.00 to 17.00 and on Friday 9.00 to 16.30.

