

What to Expect

Your physician and your radiologists have recommended that you have a breast biopsy for an abnormality in your breast. At Derry Imaging Center, we have the ability to perform that biopsy under ultrasound guidance.

Your radiologist will explain the procedure to you in detail before things get started and answer any questions you may have. You will lie on your back on a stretcher in the ultrasound procedure room. Your radiologist will find the best path to the abnormality using the ultrasound machine. Your skin will be cleansed with an antiseptic. You will be given local anesthesia, which stings for a few seconds when it is injected. After a few seconds, you should be numb but if you feel sharp pain during the biopsy, tell the radiologist, and you will be given more local anesthesia.

Once you are numb, the biopsy device will be placed through a small nick in the skin to the abnormality, and several tissue samples will be obtained. Once a good sample has been obtained, a tiny titanium marker will be placed in the breast at the location of the biopsy. The marker allows a radiologist to guide your surgeon at some point in the future to the correct spot for removal of a larger area of tissue if the biopsy shows a cancer or some other abnormality that needs an operation. If the tissue removed during the biopsy is benign (of no concern), then the tiny marker will be on all the mammograms you have in the future, but that's the only way you'll know the marker is there -- it causes no pain or discomfort, you can't find it when you do a self-exam, and it doesn't trigger off the airport metal detectors.

The nurse will apply pressure to your breast after the biopsy to minimize bleeding, and then she will apply a dressing. Instructions about what to do from that point will be given to you, and explained by the nurse. After the local anesthesia you were given for the biopsy wears off, you may experience some pain or discomfort in your breast, which will generally respond to whatever you normally take for a headache.

Results from the biopsy are usually available from the pathology laboratory in three business days, and if you haven't heard from your provider by the fourth business day, you should call your provider unless you have a follow-up appointment where the results will be discussed. If you have any questions, at any time before, during, or after the procedure, please call our office at 603.537.1377 or one of our Breast Health Nurse Navigators ext. 1374.