

# UNITED HOSPITAL CENTER PATIENT EDUCATION

## STEREOTACTIC BREAST BIOPSY



Your physician has referred you to the Diagnostic Services Department at United Hospital Center for a stereotactic breast biopsy. This simple procedure uses advanced computer imaging technology. It allows for the removal of tiny sections of tissue that indicate they required further attention after showing up on a mammogram, but cannot be felt. This modern procedure provides the same reliability as the more complicated surgical biopsy, but provides these significant advantages:

- It does not require anesthesia
- It requires less time
- It is more cost effective
- It is much less complicated

After arriving in the Diagnostic Services Department, you will be taken to the Stereotactic Breast Biopsy room. You will be asked to remove the clothing on the upper portion of your body and put on a gown. Your technologist will position you face down on the x-ray table. Your breast will be placed through a hole in the table top. Once you are in position, your breast will be held in place with compression. This is done to verify the location of the area to be sampled. If not quite right, you will be repositioned until it is.

The radiologist will review these films. He/she will use a computer to read the x-rays and locate the precise area of your breast tissue which will be sampled. Next, the radiologist or surgeon will cleanse and numb the area to be tested. You may feel a tiny pinch similar to a pin prick. A small incision (no more than 1/4") will be made through which the biopsy needle will be inserted. You may feel some slight pressure during this time. It is important to relax. This should not be painful. Occasionally, an ultrasound machine may be used to visualize structures.

Once the radiologist or surgeon has obtained several samples of breast tissue, a sterile gauze and ice may be applied to the examined area for several minutes to prevent bleeding. Sometimes it is necessary to take two pictures of the breast in order to complete the procedure. Finally, before leaving, a simple pressure bandage and/or sterile strip(s) will be placed over the small incision. Instructions will then be provided concerning care of the area.

There is no special preparation for this procedure. For your comfort, a two piece outfit and a supportive bra should be worn. Jewelry, other than rings, is best left at home. Medications you are taking, especially anti-coagulants, aspirin and lasix should be discussed at the time your appointment is made. A light meal before the exam will probably keep you more comfortable than a heavy one, but the choice is yours.

The entire stereotactic breast biopsy procedure can take as little as one hour. After the procedure you will be free to return to your normal activities, unless told otherwise by your doctor. You may experience some bruising and soreness and you should avoid strenuous activity and heavy lifting for

the remainder of the day. Your breast will heal quickly, leaving almost no sign of the procedure. Scarring of the breast almost never occurs.

A pathologist, a physician that specializes in analyzing tissue samples under a microscope, will prepare a report for your physician. Typically, the results will be available in 24-48 hours. Your doctor will review the results and discuss the findings with you at your follow up visit.

If you are pregnant, or think you might be, tell your doctor and the technologist **BEFORE** your exam.

**DISCLAIMER:** The content contained in this patient education is presented solely with the intent of providing public service information on health and health-related issues. This information is neither intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Always consult your physician or other qualified health provider prior to utilizing any of the information presented in this patient education. UHC makes no warranty, representation or guaranty as to the content, accuracy, timeliness or completeness of the information presented in this patient education or that the information may be relied upon for any reason.

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