

Breast Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA)

Your doctor has ordered a breast fine needle aspiration procedure to be conducted in the Sheila R. Veloz Breast Center. The breast center is staffed with sensitive and caring staff that include, certified technologists, a breast health nurse navigator, and board certified radiologists, all who are breast imaging specialists.

What Is A Fine Needle Aspiration?

This procedure uses a fine needle to remove fluid or cells from a breast lesion or cyst. It may also be used to aspirate a cyst to remove it completely or relieve discomfort. If the lesion cannot be felt from the surface of the skin, the radiologist may use guidance for breast FNA by using ultrasound images or mammography.

Who Performs The Procedure?

The fine needle aspiration is performed by a radiologist that is trained in performing breast procedures.

What Happens During The Procedure?

The doctor performing the breast fine needle aspiration will decide whether it is best to use ultrasound or mammography images to locate the lesion and guide placement of the needle. If the doctor can feel the lesion it is said to be "palpable", and these are sometimes sampled without using imaging to guide the needle.

Ultrasound Guidance

You will be lying on your back on the examination bed in the ultrasound room, the upper body undressed, with one arm above your head on the pillow in a comfortable position. The radiologist will put a clear gel on your breast and the ultrasound transducer or probe will be slowly moved across the breast to show and identify the lesion on the ultrasound screen. The breast is cleaned and numbed in the area of the mass with xylocaine, a local anesthetic.

A fine needle is placed through the skin and into the lesion guided by the ultrasound images. When the needle is inserted into the lesion, the radiologist will make several small forward and backward, gentle movements with the needle to collect cells or, if the lesion is a cyst, fluid may be collected. Two or three separate samples are usually taken in this way to ensure a good sample has been obtained.

Mammogram Guidance

If the lesion is too small to feel and cannot be located with ultrasound, you may need mammography to find the lesion and help the radiologist direct the needle into the lesion to get a sample of tissue.

The breast is cleaned and numbed in the area of the mass with xylocaine, a local anesthetic. After the needle is placed into the breast, the radiologist will use mammogram images to check the correct positioning of the needle within the lesion before the sample is taken.

How Do I Prepare For The Breast Fine Needle Aspiration?

- Don't use lotion, cream, powder, deodorant, or perfume on your arm, underarm, or breast on the day of the procedure.
- Please inform us if you are sensitive to or allergic to any medicines, latex, tape, and local anesthesia medicines.
- Please inform us if you have a history of bleeding disorders and are taking any blood-thinning medicines, aspirin, ibuprofen, or other medicines that affect blood clotting. You will need to stop taking these medicines 5 days before the biopsy.

How Long Will The Breast Fine Needle Aspiration Take?

You can expect the procedure to last about 30 minutes.

What Are The Risks Of A Breast Fine Needle Aspiration?

All procedures have some risk. Some possible complications of a fine needle aspiration include:

- Bruising and mild pain at the biopsy site
- Prolonged bleeding from the biopsy site
- Infection near the biopsy site

Please contact our office if you have any of the following:

- Fever or chills
- Redness, swelling, bleeding, or other drainage from the biopsy site
- Increased pain around the biopsy site

How Will I Feel After The Breast Fine Needle Aspiration?

Generally patients feel fine after the procedure. Usually there isn't any pain associated with the procedure. If there is mild pain, it can easily be controlled with Tylenol.

When Can I Expect To Know My Results?

The results of your breast fine needle aspiration will be sent to your doctor within three to five working days. Your doctor will inform you of the results.

Who Can I Contact For Questions?

For scheduling or billing questions contact 661.200.1099. Our staff is here to help answer any questions or concerns you have. Our breast health nurse navigators are available to answer questions and provide support before, during, and after your procedure.