A breast biopsy is a minor procedure, which removes tissues from the breast so that it can be tested to determine if the patient has cancer. An accurate biopsy can be taken from most patients without the need for open surgical procedure.

An image-guided biopsy is required when an abnormality is detected on a mammogram and/or ultrasound scan. However, 90% of the biopsies are negative (Health Promotion Board, 2012)\(^1\) i.e. no cancer is found.

**What to Expect During the Procedure**

There are several types of percutaneous breast procedures available.
- Fine Needle Aspiration
- Core Needle Biopsy
- Vacuum Assisted Biopsy

These procedures are done under local anesthesia and can be performed as an outpatient procedure.

The area in the breast where the abnormality is noted is first localised using an ultrasound or mammogram machine. The radiologist then inserts a needle to obtain small samples of tissue. Several needle insertions are usually required to obtain an adequate sample.

**After The Procedure**

- Ensure that you have someone to accompany you home after the procedure.
- You will be given a dressing to cover the puncture site after the procedure. Please keep the dressing dry. The dressing can be removed after 2 days.
- Should there be any bleeding, do compress the wound firmly for 15-20 minutes. If the bleeding persists, please call our Breast Care Centre (Breast Imaging) at 6772 2636 (during office hours), Emergency Department at 6772 5000 (after office hours) or see a Doctor/GP at the nearest clinic around your area.
- Should you experience pain over the wound site, you may take Paracetomol or Codeine. Do NOT take Aspirin or Ponstan (mefenamic acid) for the pain.
- Avoid vigorous swinging of the arm on the affected side for 48 hours after the biopsy.

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