

What are the complications?

Both the fine needle aspiration and core biopsy tests are very safe procedures but there are some possible complications, such as:

- Pain
- Bruising/bleeding
- Infection
- Pneumothorax collapsed lung - rare

Your specialist will discuss these with you in detail beforehand.

Please note, x-rays can be harmful to an unborn child so you must tell the radiographer if you think that there is a change that you could be pregnant.

Results

Your specialist will discuss your imaging results and the results of the biopsy (if performed) with you. A breast care nurse will also be available to offer information and support.

What happens next?

If necessary your specialist will discuss the options for further investigations and treatment. If you require surgery you will be offered a date for the operation.

Facilities

There is a coffee shop at the Rose Centre where you can buy food and drink. Water coolers are available throughout the Rose Centre.

Any questions?

If you are a new patient referred through the two week rule process please call:

020 8725 1111

If you need to rebook your appointment please call:

020 8725 3000

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The breast clinic

General Surgery
Oupatients

Information
for patients

This leaflet provides patients with information on the breast clinic and what they can expect from their appointment.

What is the breast clinic?

The breast clinic is an outpatient clinic where you can see a specialist. You may have all of your investigations at this first visit which helps to speed up the process of identifying problems. It can take up to four hours to complete so please allow plenty of time. Some of the results may be available on the same day, others will be available the following week.

Who is the clinic for?

It is for patients who have been referred with a breast lump or other breast problem.

Before you come to the clinic

- You may wish to bring a member of your family or a friend to keep you company and to provide support for you. It is not a good idea to bring young children with you as they may get bored during the visit.
- You may find it helpful to write down your concerns or questions before your appointment and to bring them with you as a reminder.

On arrival at the clinic

- Please check in at main reception or at the kiosk. You will be shown into an examination room by one of the clinic staff when it is time for your appointment.
- A member of the medical team will take your medical details and ask you the date of your last menstrual period, details of any medicines you are taking and if you have any family history of breast cancer.
- You will see a specialist who will discuss your breast problem with you and examine your breasts and armpits.
- He/she will discuss with you which tests you need to have, if any, and these will be arranged – often for the same day.
- We recognise that this can be a very stressful time for you. Please be reassured that the majority of patients referred to this clinic do not have cancer.

Investigations or tests

These may include the following:

Mammogram

This is an x-ray of your breasts. Each breast is held firmly between two plates and several images will be taken of each breast. Some women may find this uncomfortable but it only lasts a few seconds. Mammograms are offered to most women attending the clinic over the age of 40. Please ask to see further information on mammograms.

Ultrasound scan

An ultrasound examination is a painless way of obtaining a picture of the inside of your breast without using x-rays. It involves gently moving a sensor over the breast, which picks up sound waves that produce a picture on a screen. This is a useful test for younger women – and it may be the only test needed. For women over 40 this test may be offered as well as a mammogram.

Needle biopsy

Following a local anaesthetic to numb the area the specialist will insert a needle to remove a small sample (a core biopsy) of the breast tissue, which is then sent to the laboratory for more detailed examination.

Fine need aspiration

This is a quick and simple test, similar to a blood test. A needle is inserted into the breast lump to draw off cells or fluid. It can be a little painful, but it only takes a few moments. The cells are then sent to the laboratory for analysis.