

Breast Abscess

This leaflet gives information about breast abscesses. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your care.

What is a breast abscess and why have I got it?

A breast abscess is an infection that results in the build-up of pus under the skin of the breast. An abscess is painful and the breast is usually red and swollen.

What treatments are available?

You have been seen by a doctor or nurse in the Emergency Department (ED) who has assessed your abscess and feels that you can be treated as an outpatient. You will be sent home with antibiotics and painkillers.

Antibiotics: Flucloxacillin 500mg four times a day
OR
Clindamycin 300mg four times a day (if you are allergic to penicillin)
(Delete as indicated)

Painkillers: Paracetamol 1g four times a day
Diclofenac 50mg three times a day.

What happens if I do not get treatment?

A breast abscess will get worse if untreated and may lead to systemic infections such as sepsis.

Do I need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

Yes. Before you leave ED you will be given a specific time to attend the ultrasound department in the Rose Centre at St George's Hospital. This appointment is usually the next day but if you are seen over the weekend then your breast scan will take place on Monday morning. The ultrasound department at the Rose Centre opens at the following times:

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| Monday | 9.00am |
| Tuesday | 1.30pm |
| Wednesday | 1.30pm |
| Thursday | 9.00am |
| Friday | 1.30pm |

Please do not attend the ultrasound department at the Rose Unit in the mornings on Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday as they will not be able to perform the scan until the afternoon.

During the ultrasound scan the radiology doctor will drain the pus from the abscess under local anaesthetic. This should help to relieve the pain.

Date and time of your ultrasound appointment at the Rose Centre:

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After the ultrasound scan you will be sent home. You will receive an appointment to be seen in the breast clinic soon after the ultrasound. The breast clinic is also in the Rose Centre. You will receive the appointment either by post or by a telephone call.

Please bring a copy of your ED notes to the ultrasound department as well as to the breast clinic on your two separate appointments.

What should I do if my symptoms get worse?

Should you develop any signs of a worsening infection or sepsis (slurred speech, shivering or muscle pain, mottled or discoloured skin, severe breathlessness or feeling generally very unwell) please return to the ED immediately.

Contact us

If you have not received an appointment for the breast clinic within five days of your ultrasound scan you can call the breast unit secretary on 020 8725 3083.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health. **Web:** www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones. **Tel:** 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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