



Fine Needle Aspiration of the Breast

You and your health care provider have decided that you need a fine needle aspiration to check an area in your breast. This procedure can be used to collect cells to be looked at under a microscope or to drain fluid from a cyst in your breast.

What is fine needle aspiration?

Fine needle aspiration (FNA) is a procedure to *aspirate* (remove) cell samples through a very thin needle into a syringe. Each sample takes less than 1 minute to remove, and the whole procedure usually takes 10 to 15 minutes. It will be done in your doctor's office.

Why am I having this procedure?

Your health care provider has advised you to have an FNA because a lump was found in your breast. FNA is one way to collect cells from the lump to test in the lab.

FNA is also used to drain fluid from some cysts. This may be done to examine the fluid and relieve pain.

How does it work?

You will undress from the waist up and lie down on an exam table. Your doctor will inject a local *anesthetic* (numbing medicine) into the skin and deeper tissues of your breast. When the tissue is numb, your doctor will insert a very thin needle into it. The needle will be moved around within the numb area, and tissue samples will be drawn up through the needle into a syringe. Most women have only slight discomfort during this procedure.

When will I get the results?

Most times, we get your lab results within 7 days. A nurse will call you as soon as we have your results and a doctor has reviewed them. If you have not heard from us within 7 days, please call us.

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Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

Women's Health Care Center: 206-598-5500
weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For emergencies after hours and on weekends, please call 206-598-6190 and ask for the Gynecology doctor on call.

Do I need any care after the procedure?

A small bandage will be placed over the site where the needle was inserted. The needle will leave a very small mark that will go away in a few days. You should have very little bleeding, and you may remove the bandage after a few hours.

Some women have a small amount of breast tenderness or bruising for a few days. You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol and other brands) and use an ice pack on the area to relieve discomfort. Do **not** use aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, and other brands) for pain because these may increase bleeding.

When to Call the Doctor

Call the Women's Health Care Center at 206-598-5500 and ask to speak with the Breast Clinic nurse if you have:

- Swelling or redness that does not go away
- Bleeding at the needle site that does not stop
- Fever higher than 101°F (38.3°C)
- Pain that is not relieved by acetaminophen

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