

Excision Biopsy of a Breast Lump

B06 Lite - Expires end of January 2025



This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

© EIDO Systems International Limited. The operation and treatment information in this document is published under license from EIDO Systems International and is protected by copyright laws. Other than for your personal, non-commercial use, you may not copy, print out, download or otherwise reproduce any of the information.

eidohealthcare.com



What is an excision biopsy of a breast lump?

An excision biopsy of a breast lump involves removing a lump through a small cut.

What are the benefits?

An excision biopsy is usually performed for the following reasons:

- You may want to have the lump removed. You may have cosmetic reasons or the lump may be causing you pain.
- Your surgeon may be concerned about the lump. The tissue will be examined under a microscope to find out if you have cancer.

Are there any alternatives?

If the lump is probably benign and less than about 2 centimetres across, it may be possible to remove it using a special needle called a mammotome, but a mammotome excision is available only in a few specialist centres.

What will happen if I decide not to have the procedure or the procedure is delayed?

Your surgeon may not be able to confirm if you have cancer or recommend the best treatment for you. If your surgeon suspects the lump may be cancerous, the procedure will not be delayed.

If you are waiting for the procedure or have chosen not to have it and you experience any of the following symptoms, contact your healthcare team:

- The lump getting bigger or becoming noticeable to others.
- New concerns about the lump.
- New or worsening pain.

If the lump is caused by cancer, early diagnosis and treatment will increase the chance of you being free of cancer.

What does the procedure involve?

If your surgeon cannot feel the lump, a breast radiologist will carry out a marking procedure using a mammogram machine or ultrasound scanner. This procedure will guide your surgeon to find out where the lump is.

The procedure is usually performed under a general anaesthetic but various anaesthetic techniques are possible. The procedure usually takes about 30 minutes.

If possible your surgeon will make the cut on the line of the areola (the darker area around your nipple).

Your surgeon will go through your breast tissue and remove the lump.

How can I prepare myself for the procedure?

If you smoke, stopping smoking now may reduce your risk of developing complications and will improve your long-term health.

Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications if you are overweight.

Regular exercise should help you prepare for the procedure, help you recover and improve your long-term health. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

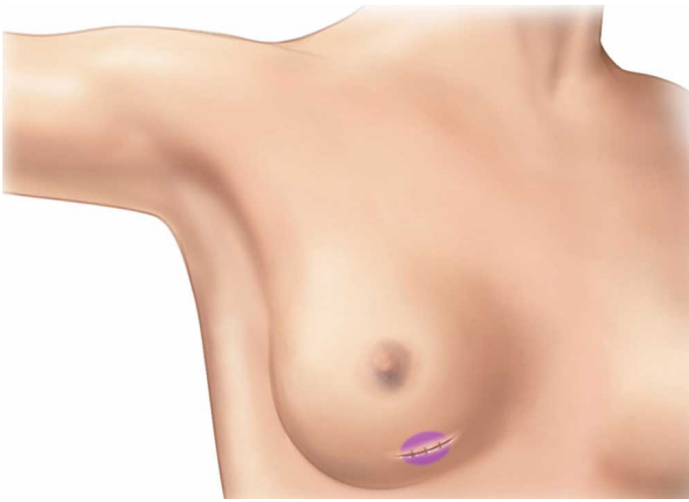
Speak to the healthcare team about any vaccinations you may need to reduce your risk of serious illness while you recover. When you come into hospital, practise hand washing and wear a face covering when asked.

What complications can happen?

Possible complications of this procedure are shown below. Some complications can be serious and can even be life threatening.

General complications of any procedure

- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical wound
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- Venous thromboembolism



An excision biopsy

- Chest infection

Specific complications of this procedure

- Continued lumpiness under your wound
- Continued pain
- Dissatisfaction with breast appearance over time
- Change of nipple sensation

Consequences of this procedure

- Pain
- Scarring of your skin, which can be unsightly

What happens after the procedure?

You should be able to go home the same day.

You should be able to return to work after 3 to 7 days.

You should be able to return to normal activities after about 10 days.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

The healthcare team will arrange for you to come back to the clinic within 4 weeks. The lump that your surgeon removed will have been examined under a microscope. Your surgeon will tell you the results, check your wound, and discuss with you any treatment or follow-up care you need.

Summary

An excision biopsy involves removing a lump from your breast. It can help prevent an unsightly appearance and find out what is causing the lump. If the lump is causing you pain, you may get relief from the pain.

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

Acknowledgements

Reviewer

Peter Gregory (MS, FRACS)

Illustrator

Medical Illustration Copyright © Nucleus Medical Art. All rights reserved. www.nucleusinc.com