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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Caring for Yourself After Your Image-Guided Breast Biopsy

This information will help you care for your biopsy site after your ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), or stereotactic breast biopsy.

## Caring for Your Biopsy Site

Follow these guidelines after your procedure.

- Keep the bandage on your biopsy site until the day after your biopsy.
- Leave the Steri-Strips™ (thin strips of paper tape) on your biopsy site. If they don't fall off on their own in 3 days, you can remove them.
- You can shower 24 hours (1 day) after your biopsy. Remove your bandage before showering but leave the Steri-Strips in place. Let the shower water run over your biopsy site. Gently pat it dry with a clean towel. You don't need to put another bandage on your biopsy site after you shower, unless there is any drainage. If there is, place a clean bandage (Band-Aid®) over your

biopsy site.

- You may have swelling and bruising after your biopsy. Apply an ice pack to the area for 10 to 15 minutes several times during the first 24 to 48 hours (1 to 2 days) after your procedure. This will help reduce swelling. The bruises and swelling should go away on their own in about a week.
- If you have any bleeding from your biopsy site, apply steady pressure with a gauze pad. If the bleeding becomes heavy or doesn't stop, call your healthcare provider.
- Wear a tight-fitting bra to help support your biopsy site and make you feel more comfortable. Your radiologist will let you know if you need to wear any special type of bra after your biopsy.
- For 3 days after your biopsy, do not:
  - Lift anything heavier than 5 pounds (2.3 kilograms).
  - Do any strenuous exercises, such as running or jogging.
  - Bathe, swim, or soak the biopsy site under water. You may shower 24 hours after your biopsy.
- You should receive your biopsy results 3 to 5 business days (Monday through Friday) after your procedure.

## **Taking medications**

- If you have pain after your biopsy, you can take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) as instructed by your healthcare provider. Avoid taking nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) for pain, such as ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) and naproxen (Aleve®). They can cause bleeding.
- If you take medications to thin your blood (such as aspirin or other blood thinners), you can take them after your procedure on the same day, as long as you don't have a lot of bruising or bleeding from the site. Talk with your healthcare provider if you have any questions.

## **When to Call Your Healthcare Provider**

Call your healthcare provider if:

- Your breast is getting larger.
- You have increased breast tenderness.
- You have bleeding that you're worried about.
- You have any questions.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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