Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

MRI-Guided Breast Biopsy

This resource will help you get ready for your magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) guided breast biopsy.

About your breast biopsy

A breast biopsy is done to take samples of tissue from your breast to check for cancer. First, you'll have an MRI done to find the exact area of your breast to biopsy. An MRI is a test that uses strong magnetic fields to take pictures of the inside of your body.

Once your radiologist finds the area to biopsy, they'll guide a thin needle into your breast. A radiologist is a doctor who specializes in image-guided procedures. They'll remove a sample of tissue or cells to check it for cancer.

After your biopsy, you'll have a mammogram.

If you have any of the devices listed below, call 646-227-2323. It may not be safe for you to have an MRI.



- Pacemaker
- Automatic implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (AICD)
- Breast tissue expander
- Aneurysm clip

If an MRI is not safe for you, your doctor will order a different test. If you have any questions about your MRI, call your doctor's office.

What to do before your procedure

Take devices off your skin

If you wear one of these devices on your skin, you may need to take it off before your MRI:

- Most medicine patches
- Continuous glucose monitor (CGM)
- Insulin pump

If you change your device, talk with your healthcare provider about scheduling your appointment closer to the date you need to change it. Make sure you have an extra device or medicine patch with you to put on after your MRI.

If you have a medical implant or device, ask the healthcare provider who put it in for the exact name and manufacturer. If you don't have this information, you may need to reschedule your MRI.

Contrast

Contrast is a special dye that makes it easier for your healthcare provider to see differences in your body. Your nurse or radiologist will place an intravenous (IV) line in your arm to give you your IV contrast.

Reactions to contrast

Some people may have an allergic reaction to contrast. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any allergies or if you've had a reaction to contrast in the past. They may prescribe medicine to lower your risk of having a reaction. Read *Preventing An Allergic Reaction to Contrast Dye* (www.mskcc.org/pe/allergic-reaction-contrast) to learn more.

Breastfeeding and contrast

Your healthcare provider will ask you if you're pregnant or think you might become pregnant. It's safe to get contrast while breastfeeding. Some people choose not to breastfeed for 24 hours after receiving MRI contrast. If you're breastfeeding, talk to your healthcare provider about your options.

Talk with your healthcare provider about relaxing during your MRI

During your MRI, you'll lie face down with your hands above your head for 30 minutes to 1 hour. Your breasts will fit into cushioned holes in the table. The MRI machine makes loud noises during the scan.

Talk with your healthcare provider before your scan if:

- You think you'll be uncomfortable lying still
- You're afraid of being in a narrow or small space.

They may prescribe medicine to help you feel more comfortable.

What to do the day of your procedure

Things to remember

- Know the time and location of your MRI. Please arrive 1 hour before your appointment time.
- If you wear a medical device or medicine patch on your skin, bring an extra one with you.
- If your healthcare provider prescribed medicine to help you relax, take it 30 to 60 minutes before your MRI.
- Leave any valuables at home if you don't need them. This includes extra credit cards, extra cash, and jewelry. Jewelry can make the images from your scan harder to read. Certain metals can also heat up and cause burns during your scan. Tell a member of your care team if you cannot take your jewelry off before the day of your scan.
- If you're wearing nail polish with metal in it, tell a radiology staff member when you check in. This is because the metal in the nail polish may make the images from your scan hard to read. You'll need to put your hands in a different position during your scan.

What to expect

You'll change into a hospital gown before going into the scanning area. You'll place your clothing, credit cards, and any objects (such as your phone, jewelry, coins, and glasses) in a locker. This is because objects with even a small amount of metal can fly into the magnet. The magnet can also damage cell phones and credit cards.

Your nurse will place an IV line in one of your veins, usually in your arm or hand. Your radiologist will explain the procedure and answer any questions you have. They will also ask you to sign a consent form stating that you agree to the procedure.

Your technologist will bring you to the scanning room and help you onto the MRI table. The MRI machine is a large, donut-shaped magnet. It makes a loud tapping noise during the scan. You'll lie face down on your stomach with your hands above your head.

During your procedure

Once you're comfortable on the MRI table, your technologist will slide it into the magnetic part of the machine and begin the scan. You'll slide into the scanner more than once. You'll be able to speak with your technologist during the entire scan. It's important to lie still and breathe normally. You may want to do your relaxation exercises during your scan.

Your breast(s) will be compressed to take pictures. The pictures will help your radiologist find the area they need to biopsy. Once they find the area of your breast to biopsy, your radiologist will give you an injection (shot) of a local anesthetic (medicine to make an area numb) into your breast.

After the area is numb, your radiologist will make a small incision (surgical cut) in your breast and insert a thin needle. They'll remove samples of tissue or cells. The sample will be sent to the Pathology Department to check it for cancer cells.

Your radiologist will leave a small marker at the area of your incision to help your healthcare provider identify the biopsied area. You won't be able to feel this marker. Your radiologist will then put Steri-Strips™ (thin pieces of paper tape) over your incision.

Your procedure will take 30 minutes to 1 hour.

What to do after your procedure

After your procedure, you'll have a mammogram. After your mammogram, your technologist will place a bandage over your Steri-Strips. Your nurse will give you the resource *Caring for Yourself After Your Image-Guided Breast Biopsy* (www.mskcc.org/pe/after_image_guided_breast_biopsy). This has instructions on how to care for your biopsy site.

Getting your results

Your radiologist will call you with your biopsy results in 3 to 5 business days (Monday through Friday). They'll also send a report to your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will use the results of your biopsy to help plan your care.

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 to search our virtual library.

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