

# Breast marker clip insertion under ultrasound guidance

Breast imaging, Radiology

## Introduction

A specialist, such as your doctor or a member of the breast imaging team (radiographer), has advised you to have a breast marker clip inserted under ultrasound guidance. This leaflet has been written to help you understand what the procedure involves, along with the benefits, risks and alternatives.

## What is a breast marker clip insertion?

A tiny metallic marker clip is inserted into the breast using ultrasound as a guide to ensure it is placed within the area previously seen on ultrasound.

## Consent

We must seek your consent for any procedure or treatment beforehand. The specialist undertaking the procedure (or professional trained to take consent) will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives where relevant before they ask for your consent. If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure or treatment proposed please do not hesitate to ask for more information

## What are the benefits of having the procedure?

Your doctor or member of the breast imaging team will discuss the benefits with you prior to undertaking the procedure if you ask.

Breast marker clips are used for several different reasons. For example, they may be inserted following an ultrasound guided core biopsy to act as a 'landmark' showing the area that was biopsied.

Some patients have marker clips inserted when they are about to begin neo-adjuvant chemotherapy (chemotherapy that is given before surgery). This is because sometimes the chemotherapy shrinks a breast cancer to the point where it can no longer be felt or it is no longer visible on ultrasound. The marker clip in this instance acts as a 'landmark' to show the location of a breast cancer to aid surgery after a patient completes their chemotherapy.

## What are the risks of the procedure?

- A small amount of bleeding may occur at the site where the clip has been inserted. Bruising (haematoma) to the breast is common. Sometimes the bruise may make your breast feel lumpy or it may make a lump that you have already noticed feel bigger than it did before.

**If you are on any blood thinning medication then please let us know straight away.**

**The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.**

- **Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available**
- **If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111**
- **Keep the environment clean and tidy**
- **Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.**

- Infection at the site where the clip is inserted is rare but a possibility
- It is possible that the marker clip may be incorrectly positioned during the procedure. If this happens then another marker clip will need to be inserted. As the ultrasound guides the needle that holds the marker clip into the abnormality, then this is unlikely to happen and therefore is a rare complication
- A pneumothorax (punctured lung) is an extremely rare complication of a breast marker clip insertion under ultrasound control. It is important to note that using ultrasound to guide the needle to the abnormality during the procedure enables the needle to be seen throughout the procedure, minimising the risk that the lung will be punctured
- Injury to the armpit (axillary) tissue or blood vessels is also a rare complication if the abnormality to which the marker clip is being inserted into is located within the armpit
- Following the insertion of the marker clip a Mammogram (X-ray of the breast) may be required to check the position of the clip
- There are some risks involved with the use of X-rays. The overriding concern of your doctor and Radiology is to ensure that when radiation is used the benefits from making the right diagnosis outweigh any small risk involved
- X-rays can very rarely cause cancer. According to the National Breast Screening Programme having a mammogram every 3 years for 20 years can very slightly increase the chance of getting cancer over a woman's lifetime, Radiologists / Radiographers who perform the examination are trained to ensure that the radiation dose associated with the examination is always kept to a minimum.

## Are there any alternatives to a breast marker clip insertion, and what happens if I decide not to have it done?

There is not an alternative procedure that can be offered instead of an ultrasound guided marker clip insertion to landmark an abnormality within the breast. You can decline to have the procedure done, however please consider that this may impact on any future care you may need as the area may not be accurately localised again.

## What will I need to do before the procedure?

- Please bring with you a list of your medication (we will need to check certain medication)
- You will be asked to remove your clothing from your top half of your body, including your bra. Then you will be asked to wear a hospital gown. You are welcome to bring your own dressing gown to wear at your appointment.

## How long will I be at the hospital?

At least 45 minutes, this will include time to sign the consent form.

## What will happen during the procedure?

- You will be taken into the ultrasound room and asked to lie on your back on the ultrasound couch
- Ultrasound gel will be applied to your breast and the specialist will use the ultrasound scanner to find the area where the marker clip needs to be inserted into
- Your skin will be cleaned and a local anaesthetic will be administered through an injection in the breast. If you are having the marker clip inserted immediately after a biopsy then the area will already be anaesthetised (numb) so you will not require any additional anaesthetic. The specialist will ensure that the area is numb before proceeding
- Once the local anaesthetic has taken effect, a small cut is made in the skin and a needle with the marker clip inside is positioned in the middle of the area required to be marked. If you are having the marker clip inserted immediately after a biopsy then the same small cut made during the biopsy will be used

- The needle containing the marker clip is positioned into the abnormality; the specialist will use the ultrasound to guide this. The marker clip is inserted inside the area required. It is very unlikely that you will feel this happen
- You can choose to stop the procedure at any point however if the marker clip is not positioned into your breast the abnormality will not be landmarked. This may alter further tests or future treatment.

## What happens after the procedure?

- A small dressing will be applied to the skin; this can be removed after 24 hours
- You will then be taken into another room where a mammogram will be performed to check the position of the marker clip within the breast. This procedure will be explained to you by the mammographer conducting the examination
- The mammogram will be checked by the specialist who undertook the marker clip insertion.

## What is the aftercare advice?

Most women feel some discomfort and experience bruising to the breast following the procedure. If your breasts feel tender please take over the counter painkillers such as Paracetamol as per the instructions on the packet. Avoid products containing Aspirin.

It is recommended to avoid heavy lifting for 48 hours following the procedure. Lifting small babies is not a problem usually. The dressing can be removed after 24 hours; you do not need to reapply another dressing. Keep the site clean and dry.

Underwired bras can be worn as normal following the biopsy procedure to provide support to the breast.

The marker clip will remain within the breast. The marker clip is tiny and it is very unlikely that you will be able to feel it within your breast.

## Will it be painful?

Some patients experience discomfort or pain when the local anaesthetic is given. The local anaesthetic used works quickly and the area will go numb.

A mammogram is required following the clip insertion to check the position of the clip within the breast. Some patients experience mild discomfort during this examination as the breast is compressed.

Some patients experience aching and discomfort of the breast following the procedure, once the local anaesthetic wears off.

It is very unlikely that you will be able to feel the clip once in place or that the clip causes any discomfort once the bruising has resolved.

## Can I go back to work?

Yes, you can however it is recommended to avoid heavy lifting activities. Carrying small babies, less than a year old, is not considered heavy lifting.

In our experience discomfort felt post procedure is minor and does not impact on normal routine activities like driving.

## What follow up should I expect?

If you are having a breast marker clip inserted immediately after a biopsy then an appointment will be arranged for you to come back to the hospital for your biopsy results.

If you are having a breast marker clip inserted prior to beginning your chemotherapy treatment you should expect an appointment with your Oncologist to discuss your treatment.

## What to do if the appointment is not suitable

We are happy to change you're appointment; however certain sessions within the week are for clinic appointments only. You can contact us on 01902 695923. This is a direct line; you will not need to go through switchboard.

If you are unable to attend for your appointment please let us know as soon as possible so that it can be given to someone else.

## Whom can I speak to if I want to ask questions before I come for the procedure?

The breast care nurses can be contacted on 01902 695144 during office hours of 8.30am and 4pm. There is a 24 hour answer machine on this line and if the breast care nurses are unavailable then please leave your name and telephone number and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

Alternatively if you would like to speak to a radiographer / sonographer about the procedure then please call **01902 695923** during office hours of 8.30am to 5pm.

## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。