

X-ray (stereotactic) guided marker clip insertion

Breast Imaging, Radiology

A specialist, either a Doctor or a member of the breast imaging team (Radiographer), has advised you to have an X-ray guided marker clip insertion. This leaflet has been written to help you understand what the procedure involves, along with the benefits, risks and alternatives.

What is an X-ray guided marker clip insertion?

A tiny metallic marker clip is inserted into the breast using X-rays as a guide to ensure it is placed within the area seen on the X-rays (mammograms).

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?

- Breast marker clips are used to mark the area that has been previously biopsied (a sample of tissue taken). They act as a 'landmark' to show the specialist where the biopsy has been taken from as the marker clips can easily be seen on a mammogram (X-ray) and sometimes they can be seen on an ultrasound. This means that the area can be accurately found if further tests are required
- Breast marker clips can also be used to 'landmark' a known cancer prior to having neo-adjuvant chemotherapy (chemotherapy which is administered prior to any surgery). The clip is easily seen on a mammogram (X-ray) and sometimes they can be seen on an ultrasound. This is of benefit if the cancer completely responds (disappears) following chemotherapy as the area where the cancer was can always be localised and removed surgically.

What are the risks of the procedure?

- Any X-ray involves radiation but the dose of radiation you would receive during this procedure is low
- A small amount of bleeding may occur at the site in which the marker clip is inserted into, and bruising 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.

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.

If you are on any blood thinning medication please contact the Radiology Department straight away.

- Infection at the biopsy site is rare but a possibility
- 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 and 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 stereotactic (X-ray) guided marker clip insertion?

The Doctor or member of the breast imaging team can discuss alternatives with you if you ask.

There is not an alternative procedure that can be offered instead of an X-ray guided marker clip insertion to landmark an abnormality which has been detected in your breast. You can decline the procedure however 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, the specialist may need to ask you about certain medications.

You will be asked to remove the clothing from the top half of your body, including your bra, and wear a hospital gown. It is easier to wear a skirt or trousers instead of a dress for your appointment.

You are welcome to bring your own dressing gown to wear at your appointment

The specialist will check some details with you including certain medications.

How long will I be at the hospital for?

Please expect to be at the hospital for at least 40 minutes.

What will happen during the procedure?

- In most cases the breast marker clip is inserted immediately after a stereotactic (X-ray) guided core biopsy. If this is the case then your breast will not need to be repositioned into the X-ray machine, as this can be done whilst the breast is under compression in the same position following the biopsy procedure. The marker clip will be inserted through the same small puncture to the skin made during the biopsy procedure, this area will already be numb therefore you will not require an additional local anaesthetic. You will be given a separate leaflet to explain the biopsy procedure
- You will be taken into the X-ray room and asked to sit on a chair. Sometimes the procedure has to be undertaken with you lying down; this depends upon the position of the abnormality within your breast
- The Radiographer will position your breast into the X-ray machine and the breast will be compressed (squashed) so that you are kept still and a clear X-ray can be taken. The compression stays on the breast during the whole procedure, which usually takes around 15 minutes
- X-rays are taken to target the abnormality within your breast that the marker clip needs to be inserted into, sometimes your breast may need to be repositioned in the machine to get the most information

- A local anaesthetic will be given (by injection through the skin into the breast) to numb the area around where the marker clip needs to be inserted. The specialist will ensure the area is numb before proceeding
- A tiny cut is made in the skin
- A needle containing the tiny marker clip is placed into the breast at the targeted abnormality, and the marker clip is deployed (released) out of the needle and into the abnormality. It is very unlikely that you will feel this
- You can choose to stop the procedure at any point during the procedure 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 will happen after the procedure?

- The specialist will apply a small dressing to the site that the marker clip was inserted into
- You will then be able to get dressed
- If you are having a marker clip inserted following a biopsy, then arrangements will be made for you to get the results of your biopsy.

What is the aftercare advice?

Most women feel some discomfort and experience bruising to the breast following the procedure. If your breasts feel tender following the examination 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, under one year old is not considered heavy lifting.

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 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 compression is applied and when the local anaesthetic is given. The local anaesthetic used works quickly and the area will go numb.

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

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 such as driving.

What to do if the appointment is not suitable?

We are happy to change your appointment; however please be aware that certain sessions within the week will not be available due to different clinics being supported by Breast Imaging. 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 your appointment please let us know as soon as possible so that the appointment can be given to another patient.

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 – 4:00pm. 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 about the procedure then please call 01902 695923 during office hours of 8.30am – 5:00pm.

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。