

WHAT IS BREAST FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION (FNA)?

The breast fine needle aspiration (FNA) procedure collects some fluid or cells from a breast lesion (cyst, mass, or swelling) using a thin needle similar to that used in blood sampling.

The sample of fluid or cells (or tissue) obtained is examined by a specialist physician (cytologist).

Breast fine needle aspiration (FNA) can assist the doctor to determine the nature or diagnosis of a lesion.

Ultrasound images are used by the radiologist performing the FNA to guide the needle into the lesion.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR FNA?

No special preparation is required before a breast fine needle aspiration (FNA).

It can be performed immediately after a clinical or an imaging examination (such as a mammogram and /or ultrasound), your own doctor may have organized to find out the cause of the lesion.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN FNA?

The radiologist who performs the FNA uses ultrasound to locate the lesion and determine the way the needle will be inserted into it.

A local anesthetic injection is used, as several repetitions may be required to obtain sufficient material for an accurate diagnosis. Lesions containing fluids may not require a local anaesthetic.

ULTRASOUND GUIDANCE

After local antisepsis of the breast, the needle is inserted into the breast and guided into the lesion using ultrasound images. When the needle is in the correct position, the doctor makes small, repeated movements to collect cells.

Two or three separate samples are taken to ensure that sufficient material has been obtained.

If the lesion is a simple cyst, the fluid is aspirated until the walls of the cyst collapse.

ARE THERE ANY COMPLICATIONS FROM BREAST FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION (FNA)?

In case of pain after the FNA, simple analgesics such as paracetamol may be taken.

Avoid taking aspirin, as it has an anticoagulant effect and increases the risk of bleeding and bruising.

This risk is minimized by applying pressure and using an ice pack on the area after the procedure is completed.

FNA does not leave a scar, and there is minimal risk of inflammation.

HOW LONG DOES BREAST FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION (FNA) TAKE?

Breast fine needle aspiration (FNA) is a quick method that takes 10–20 seconds for each sample, and the procedure may be repeated several times so that the cytologist has adequate samples for examination.

The entire procedure lasts approximately 10–20 minutes.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF BREAST FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION (FNA)?

The risks of breast fine needle aspiration (FNA) are rare, minimal, and can be summarized as follows:

- Minimal bleeding and bruising, especially in cases of aspirin use or other anticoagulant therapy.
- The risk of inflammation is very rare. Breast fine needle aspiration (FNA) is a procedure performed on sterilized skin using single-use needles.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BREAST FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION (FNA)?

Breast fine needle aspiration (FNA) is a quick and simple procedure for the investigation of a breast lesion.

WHEN SHOULD I EXPECT THE RESULTS FROM AN FNA?

The samples obtained from breast fine needle aspiration (FNA) are sent to the pathology laboratory to establish the diagnosis, which is usually available within a few days.

To collect the report, it is necessary to present your ID card or another official document. If you wish the process to be carried out by another person, relevant authorization is required.