

PATIENT INFORMATION

A publication of West Tennessee Healthcare

Your Breast Biopsy

You are scheduled to have a Breast Biopsy. The purpose of this handout is to help you know how to prepare for this surgery and what to expect during your surgery.

It is the hope of the surgery staff that you will feel that you receive very good care while you are a patient in our hospital. **We are here to serve you!** Please feel free to ask any questions that you might have.

What is a Breast Biopsy?

In a breast biopsy, a small amount of tissue or fluid is removed from the breast. This tissue or fluid is sent to the lab for evaluation. A biopsy may be used to determine whether the tissue or fluid is malignant (cancerous) or benign (not harmful) or if there is an infection present. A breast biopsy may be done by making a small incision and removing all or part of the growth. In some cases, instead of making an incision, the doctor is able to obtain the sample by using a needle to withdraw the fluid or tissue.

What should I do before surgery?

- Shower the night before your surgery and in the morning before you come to the hospital with the special soap you will be given.
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery.
- Please do not chew gum. (This raises the level of acid in your stomach.)
- You may brush your teeth and rinse your mouth as long as you do not swallow any water.
- If you are taking any medicine for your heart, blood pressure, or asthma, you may take this with a small sip of water. If you take diabetes medicines and/or insulin, talk with your doctor about whether you should take them.
- Remove nail polish.
- Remove all jewelry including any body piercings.
- Do not wear makeup.
- If you are checking into the hospital on the day of your surgery:
 - Bring any medicines that you are taking to the hospital with you.
 - Wear comfortable clothing that is loose fitting, easy to get into, and opens up the front.
 - Do not bring large amounts of money or valuables with you to the hospital.
 - Have a responsible adult drive you to the hospital, stay during your surgery, and drive you home. **You will not be allowed to drive yourself home.**

What can I expect the day of surgery?

- If you are checking into the hospital on the day of your surgery, after you have been to the Admitting Office, you will be taken to a room. This may not be the room where you will be taken after surgery.
- You will be given a hospital gown and asked to remove all of your clothes including underwear and socks. Put on the gown opening in the back.
- You will be asked to remove all jewelry, glasses, hairpieces, contact lenses, dentures, prosthesis, and hearing aids.
- You will be asked questions about your medical history. Many of these will be the same questions that you have already been asked. Please know that we need to ask these again so that we can give you the best possible care.
- You may go straight to the operating room or you may go to the Pre-Anesthesia Unit (PAU). If you go to the PAU, you will be there for about one hour before your surgery.
- Your nurse will tell your family where to wait.
- You will have an IV (needle in your arm for fluids) started and you will be given medicine that will help you relax.
- You will be asked on which breast the doctor is going to operate and this will have a mark placed on it.
- Someone from anesthesia will talk with you about the type of anesthesia that will be used.
- You will be taken to the operating room. This room will be cold and your nurse will give you a warm blanket.
- The operating room staff will include your doctor, his assistant, an anesthetist (the person who will put you to sleep), a circulating nurse, and a scrub nurse. All of these people are there to care for you and no one else.
- You will have sticky pads placed on your chest so that the staff can watch your heart. A blood pressure cuff will be placed on your arm so that your blood pressure can be checked. A device called a pulse oximeter will be put on your finger. It will tell us how much oxygen is in your blood.
- The anesthetist will put a soft mask over your face. This will give you plenty of oxygen. You will be given medicine in your IV that will relax you until you go to sleep. You will not be awake during your surgery.
- A nurse will call your family and tell them how you are doing.
- At the end of your surgery the anesthetist will give you medicine that will help you to wake up.
- You will be taken to the Recovery Room. You will be in this room for about 30 minutes to one hour. The nurse will check your blood pressure, pulse, oxygen level, and surgical site. The doctor will talk with your family.
- When you are awake you will go back to your room.
- Call for the nurse to help you the first time that you need to get out of the bed.
Do not try to get up without help.
- The nurse will check you often.

- You will be given something to drink and eat. You will be asked to go to the bathroom and empty your bladder. When you have done these things you will be able to go home.

What do I need to do when I go home?

- Do not drive or operate machinery for at least 24 hours.
- Do not drink alcohol for at least 24 hours.
- Call the doctor if you notice any blood or any other drainage from your incision.
- Call the doctor if your temperature is above 100.5° twice.
- Call your doctor if you have swelling near your incision.
- Keep your incision clean and dry. If your bra irritates the area, you may leave it off for a few days or pad the area with a dressing sponge.
- Be sure to keep your appointment to see your doctor after surgery. If the doctor has not already talked with you about the results of your biopsy, he or she will talk with you about this during your visit.