

# Breast Unit Referral Information for Patients

## Who are we?

You will be seen by breast care specialists with supporting administration staff.

The team includes, Surgeons, Radiologists, Radiographers and Breast Care Nurses.

## What do the team do?

If you have a specific breast problem, we will determine an accurate diagnosis and discuss any subsequent treatment that you may need, all with the minimum delay.

## What can I expect?

You will receive a friendly greeting by experienced staff who deal only with breast conditions.

Your usual registration details will need to be checked on arrival. During your visit you will require a clinical examination.

Depending on the nature of your problem you may or may not require one or more of the following investigations.

**Please note: We try to do the required investigations on the same day whenever we can, but a small number of patients may need to come back for some tests at a later date.**

## What is a Mammogram?

- This is a low dose X-ray examination of your breasts which involves compression of the whole of your breast between two plates, lasting only a few seconds. This does not cause any harm to your breasts.

- You may find this a little uncomfortable and feel some short lived but acceptable pain.
- **PLEASE DO NOT WEAR ANY DEODORANT OR TALCUM POWDER** as it can show on the mammograms and we may need to recall you to repeat the procedure.

## What is an Ultrasound?

- Similar to that used for pregnant women, this is a painless examination of your breast using sound waves instead of x-rays.
- For the examination you will be asked to lie down and some jelly is applied to your skin.

A probe is then passed over your breast to produce a picture on the screen.

## What is a Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA)?

- This is a needle test. A small needle, like the ones used for taking blood, is passed into your breast tissue and pressure or suction applied to try and dislodge the cells so they can be examined by the Pathologist under a microscope.
- This can be performed by the Surgeon or Radiologist/Radiographer using the ultrasound machine.
- This test is a little uncomfortable and may cause bruising.

## What is a Core Biopsy?

- This involves the use of local anaesthetic into the affected area. We use a special needle to obtain a small tissue sample for analysis by the Pathologist.
- This can be performed by the Surgeon or alternatively the Radiologist/Radiographer using either the mammogram or ultrasound machine.
- According to the method used, the time may vary between 10 and 30 minutes approximately.

Whatever procedure we recommend, we will explain it to you in detail beforehand.

These procedures should not prevent you from carrying out normal activities afterwards.

**It is very difficult to predict the length of time your visit will take but please allow 2-4 hours.**

You are welcome to bring a friend or relative. Space in the mammogram/ultrasound waiting area is limited.

You will be asked to wear a cape/gown as are all patients. Therefore, to maintain the privacy of all patients, your friend/relative may be asked to wait in a separate waiting area whilst certain procedures are carried out.

## When will I get my test results?

- Usually same day unless you need to have core biopsy.
- If you do need to have a **Core Biopsy, it will take a week for the Pathologist to process your test so you will be asked to return the following week for your result, which will be fully discussed with you.**

Your **GP** will also be informed of the result and any treatment that has been recommended for you.

We recognise that this is a particularly anxious time for you. You can be assured that your visit will be made as pleasant as possible.

Please do not hesitate to ask any member of staff for information or assistance during your visit.

## Where would I go for further information?

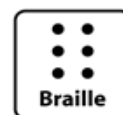
[www.aintreehospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.aintreehospitals.nhs.uk)

## How can I contact the team if I want to discuss something?

Contact a Breast Secretary on  
0151 529 4967/4968

## How can I alter my appointment?

Contact Patient Appointment Centre on  
0151 529 0159



## If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille, on audio tape or disk and in other languages on request. Please contact:

**Tel No: 0151 529 2906**

**Email: [interpretationandtranslation@aintree.nhs.uk](mailto:interpretationandtranslation@aintree.nhs.uk)**