

References

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Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA)

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This booklet can be provided
in a different format (e.g. large
print or audio cassette) on request.

W www.basildonandthurrock.nhs.uk

The Trust will not tolerate
aggression, intimidation or violence
directed towards its staff.

Our hospitals are a Zero Tolerance
zone. Zero Tolerance means ridding
the NHS of intimidation and violence
directed towards its staff.

This is a smokefree Trust.
Smoking is not allowed in any of
our hospital buildings or grounds.

What is Fine Needle Aspiration?

Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA), also known as a needle biopsy, is a quick, reliable method of diagnosing lumps that have been discovered either by you or your doctor.

Why do I need it?

When a lump is detected, possible treatment varies from observing the lump over a period of time to removing it surgically.

FNA is used to obtain a tiny sample of fluid from the lump. This is then examined under a microscope to decide the treatment.

Where is FNA carried out?

The FNA will be carried out in the Breast Unit at Basildon University Hospital as it is close to the laboratory where your sample will be analysed.

What happens during the procedure?

The lump will first be examined by a Consultant Histopathologist. The Histopathologist will explain the procedure in more detail and answer any questions that you may have.

After cleaning the area with alcohol, an anaesthetic is sprayed on the area to make it numb. A fine, hollow needle is then used to collect the fluid. (This needle is much smaller than those used to collect blood samples.)

The needle may have to pass into the lump several times to collect enough material (cells) for a diagnosis to be made. These cells will be spread on glass slides and stained with dyes to make them visible under the microscope.

Who will be there during the procedure?

The Consultant Histopathologist, a nurse and a member of the laboratory staff, who is responsible for preparing the specimen. You may have a friend or relative with you.

There may also be other members of staff, who are training in the technique. These may be a Histopathologist or a member of the laboratory staff. You can refuse to have trainees present without this affecting your treatment.

The examination room is small and can sometimes seem quite crowded, but your privacy and dignity will be respected at all times.

After the procedure, you will be asked to attend a follow up appointment.

When will I be told the result?

When all the test findings have been received, the Consultant staff will meet to discuss them. After this meeting, your results will be sent (by letter) to your GP. Please contact your GP if you have not received the result 10 days after having the procedure.

Are there any side-effects or possible complications?

Some patients experience some pain, discomfort and bruising to the area afterwards. The pain should get better within a few days and you should take simple pain relief tablets such as paracetamol, if required. The bruising may, however, last for a couple of weeks.

What are the alternatives?

- Core biopsy under local anaesthetic
- Excision biopsy under general anaesthetic