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Doctors Pathology Services



FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION



A Patient's Guide

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Overview of the FNA

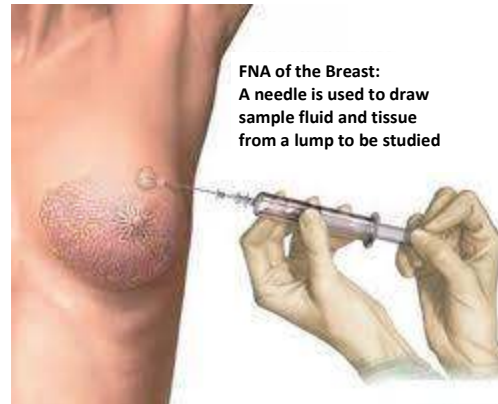
Your healthcare provider has referred you for a Fine Needle Aspiration biopsy (FNA) in order to determine whether a discovered lump is cancerous. Traditionally, this procedure was performed in a hospital, but utilizing advanced mobile technology and highly specialized clinicians, an FNA can now be performed in an outpatient center. Guided by an ultrasound instrument, a sample of your lump will be taken using a thin, small needle which will leave a mark no larger than a needle stick from a blood test. A diagnosis can often be rendered within 2 to 3 days—far faster than an FNA performed in a hospital.

How is the FNA biopsy performed?

First, the doctor will ask you some questions about the lump: where it is, how and when you first became aware of it, and if you've noticed any changes in it. Next, the doctor will perform a physical examination. Before the actual biopsy is performed the doctor will give you an opportunity to ask any questions or express any concerns you might have about the procedure. Once they have been addressed, the actual procedure will begin. Using a high-resolution ultrasound image, the doctor will precisely sample the lump with a thin needle. The sample will then be transferred to a glass slide for examination under a microscope. Usually, 2 to 3 samples are required from the lump to provide an accurate diagnosis. During the procedure, the doctor will usually leave the examination room with one of the samples to check that enough tissue has been sampled to prevent the need for a second office visit.

How long does it take?

Each sample will only take about 10 seconds to obtain. The whole procedure usually takes no more than 10 to 15 minutes, but please allow an hour for your visit to account for the registration and consultation process.



When and how will I get my results?

Generally, your results should be available from your surgeon or primary care provider's office in 2 to 3 working days. The results can be grouped into three categories:

- Clearly Benign (not cancer)
- Clearly Malignant (cancer)
- Non-Definitive, Less Clear (most often, this will be followed by a surgical biopsy)

How reliable is the FNA biopsy?

In the hands of a skilled practitioner, this test is very reliable. In the instance of a clearly benign diagnosis, it may prevent you from undergoing surgery. In the case of a clearly malignant diagnosis, either repetition of the FNA or a surgical biopsy is recommended.

Possible Complications

An FNA is typically free of significant complications but if you experience swelling, continued bleeding, fever, or significant pain, call your physician's office immediately.

Post-procedure Care

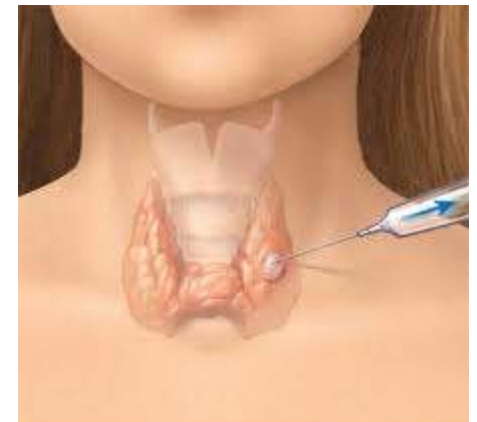
When you return home after the procedure, do the following to help ensure a smooth recovery:

- If you had an FNA, remove the bandage within a few hours. If you had a CNB, remove the bandage in a few days.
- Avoid vigorous physical activity for 24 hours.
- Any lingering pain lasting longer than 48 hours should be reported to your physician.
- Be sure to follow your doctor's instructions.

Call your Doctor If

After arriving home, contact your doctor if any of the following occur:

- Bleeding
- Signs of infection, including fever and chills
- Trouble breathing or swallowing
- Excessive swelling
- Unusual pain or discomfort



FNA of the Thyroid

