
Your First appointment at the Rapid Access Breast Clinic for Suspected Breast Cancer

If you decide not to attend this appointment please contact us on 0121 424 5000 so that we can give the appointment to someone else.

Please note that 11 out of 12 patients seen at this clinic have non-cancerous (benign) conditions.

This first appointment can take up to three hours. You may want to bring a friend or relative with you for company.

What will happen at this appointment?

In the clinic the doctor will do a physical examination of your breast (it is usually easier if you wear separates) and you **may** be asked to have one or more of the following tests.

A Mammogram

This is an X-ray examination of your breasts, performed by a female radiographer. You will be asked to undress and wear a hospital gown. Then you will be taken to an X-ray room where pictures of your breasts will be taken. These will be shown to a Consultant Radiologist who specialises in diagnosis using X-rays. Some ladies may find this procedure uncomfortable, however this is not unusual and nothing to worry about.

You must tell the Radiographer if you:

- Think you could be pregnant
- Have had any previous breast problems or surgery on your breasts
- Have had a mammogram before, anywhere
- Have any family history of breast disease or cancer
- Are receiving hormone replacement therapy

It is important you **do not** wear any underarm deodorant or talcum powder for this examination. This examination normally takes about 30 minutes to complete. If you have any worries or questions please ask the Radiographer at the time.

Ultrasound of the Breast

A special gel is spread on the breast and a small device like a microphone, which emits harmless sound waves, is passed over the area.

These sound waves called echoes are converted into pictures by a computer. A specialist Breast Radiologist performs this procedure.

Fine Needle Aspiration for Cytology (FNAC)

This is a simple procedure, which does not take long. A fine needle with a syringe attached is inserted into the lump and a specimen of the cells is withdrawn. This is called a Fine needle aspiration for Cytology.

A core needle biopsy

This is similar to a fine needle aspiration except a thicker needle is used to remove a small piece of tissue from the lump. This is then examined in the laboratory. You are usually given a local anaesthetic for this procedure.

When will I know the results?

Often the physical examination and the mammogram will provide us with sufficient information to discuss the findings with you by the end of this visit. However, sometimes these results will not be sufficiently clear for the doctor to make a diagnosis and may wish to wait for the laboratory results before telling you exactly what is wrong. You may need to return to the hospital to have a mammogram or ultrasound on a day other than the day of your first appointment.

After your tests you must make a follow up appointment with a member of the outpatient team before you leave the hospital.

What happens next?

Your choices for treatment will be discussed with you and a treatment plan (if required) will be decided. Much more detailed information will be available for you at this stage. The Breast Nurse Specialists will be there for you to talk to and information sheets will be available from them. If you have any questions before your visit, please ring the **Breast Care Nurse Specialists** on:

Good Hope Hospital 0121 424 9647 direct line and answerphone
Solihull Hospital 0121 424 5306 direct line and answerphone

Our commitment to confidentiality

We keep personal and clinical information about you to ensure you receive appropriate care and treatment. Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

We will always ask you for your consent if we need to use information that identifies you. We will share information with other parts of the NHS to support your healthcare needs, and we will inform your GP of your progress unless you ask us not to. You can help us by pointing out any information in your records which is wrong or needs updating.

Additional Sources of Information:

Go online and view NHS Choices website for more information about a wide range of health topics <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

You may want to visit one of our Health Information Centres located in:

- Main Entrance at Birmingham Heartlands Hospital Tel: 0121 424 2280
- Treatment Centre at Good Hope Hospital Tel: 0121 424 9946 or contact us by email: healthinfo.centre@heartofengland.nhs.uk.

Dear Patient

We welcome your views on what you liked and suggestions for how things could be improved at this hospital. If you would like to tell us and others about your experience please make your comments through one of the following sites:

- NHS Choice:- www.nhs.uk
- Patient Opinion:- www.patientopinion.org.uk
- I want great care:- www.iwantgreatcare.org (Here you can leave feedback about your doctor)

Be helpful and respectful: think about what people might want to know about this hospital or how your experiences might benefit others. Remember your words must be polite and respectful, and you cannot name individuals on the NHS Choice or Patient Opinion sites.

If you have any questions you may want to ask about your condition or treatment, or anything you do not understand or wish to know more about, write them down and your doctor will be more than happy to try and answer them for you.

