

# Your assessment at the Breast Unit

Information and advice for patients

## City, Sandwell and Walsall Breast Screening Service

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You have been asked to come to the breast unit for a further assessment following your routine breast screening appointment.

We understand that you may be feeling worried and hope that this information will help you to understand why you need to come for a further assessment and what will happen.

### **Why do I need a further assessment?**

Sometimes the mammogram from your breast screening appointment will not give us enough information and we may need to do further tests and examinations to look at your breasts in more detail before we can decide on a result.

About four out of 100 women who have breast screening will be asked to come back to our clinic for this further assessment. This is part of routine screening and for most women invited back nothing of concern will be found. Three out of four of these women will be found to have a normal result and will be invited for routine breast screening in three years time.

We understand that you may be worried about being invited back to the breast unit. If you have any questions about your appointment you are welcome to discuss them with our specialist staff at the Breast Unit or you may prefer to talk to one of our Breast Care Nurses before your visit.

### **Where do I go?**

Your assessment will be in the Breast Unit at City Health Campus or the Breast Unit at Walsall Manor Hospital.

The Breast Unit at City Health Campus is on the ground floor of the Birmingham Treatment Centre.

The Breast Unit at Walsall Manor Hospital is on the first floor in the Family Health and Diagnostics Department.

## **What will happen at this visit?**

When you arrive at the hospital please report to reception in the Breast Unit and take a seat. You will meet one of our Breast Care Nursing team. A radiographer will then call you into the X-ray room and explain what is going to happen.

You may have some or all of the following tests. Which test(s) you have will depend on the reason why you were called back for further assessment:

It is important that you do not wear talcum powder or spray deodorant on the day of your appointment.

### **Mammogram**

Most women will have additional imaging. This will be to show a particular part of your breast in more detail.

### **Breast Ultrasound**

Some women will need an ultrasound. An ultrasound scan will use sound waves to produce a picture of your breast tissue. Gel will be applied to your breast and a probe will be passed over the breast to produce a picture on the screen. An ultrasound is harmless, pain-free and does not involve any X-rays.

### **Breast examination**

Your doctor/practitioner will talk to you about your mammogram; they may ask you some questions about your general health and may examine your breasts. If you have any current concerns please discuss these with the doctor.

### **Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA)**

If you have a lump or an abnormal area, the doctor may pass a fine needle into the area and take a sample of cells using a syringe. The cells will then be looked at under a microscope.

### **Core Biopsy**

A core biopsy is when a larger needle is used to get a small sample of tissue, rather than just cells. This is performed under a local anaesthetic injection which numbs the area.

### **Vacuum-Assisted Core Biopsy**

A vacuum-assisted core biopsy (VAB) involves taking a small sample of breast tissue from an area within your breast. The consultant may suggest this after taking an x-ray or having an ultrasound scan. A VAB takes slightly larger samples of tissue than a standard core biopsy (although the samples taken are still quite small). This is performed under a local anaesthetic injection which numbs the area. If this procedure is performed the VAB information and advice leaflet will be given at the clinic.

## **What are the benefits?**

The benefit of these tests is that we can detect breast cancer cells at an early stage when they are too small to be seen or felt. This means your treatment can be started early. The earlier treatment is started, the higher the rate of survival.

## **What are the risks?**

After an FNA or core biopsy you may feel some discomfort at the needle site. You can take painkillers such as paracetamol to help relieve this. You may also have some bruising; this is very common and will settle down.

There is a very small risk that your ribs or lungs may be injured by the needle but this risk is much less than 1 in a 1000. This risk is reduced even more because the needle is guided using ultrasound scanning or x-ray imaging.

## **Can I bring someone with me?**

You are welcome to bring your partner, a relative or friend with you.

## **How long will the appointment take?**

The length of your visit will vary depending on what further test you are having. It can take between 2 and 4 hours.

## **What happens after the visit?**

We will notify your GP of your visit.

Most women will not need to visit the unit again; the mammogram and tests are all we need to do. If everything is well, we will invite you for your next screening in three years' time.

You may need to come back to the unit for your test results. We will let you know if you do.

If the tests show that you require treatment, we will discuss with you what will happen next. You will be cared for by our specially trained staff who will work with you to make sure you are given the best treatment at all times.

## **Women 71 years or over**

If you are 71 years or over we will not routinely call you for screening however you can still be screened if you wish. Please contact the breast screening unit by calling:

**City Health Campus** – 0121 507 4967, option 1

## **Our Breast Units**

### **City Health Campus**

#### **Address**

Breast Unit  
Birmingham Treatment Centre  
City Health Campus  
Dudley Road  
Birmingham B18 7QH

#### **Telephone**

0121 507 4967 (option 1)

#### **Car parking**

Car parking charges apply, for more information please visit:

<https://www.q-park.co.uk/en-gb/cities/birmingham/birmingham-city-hospital/>

Tickets must be paid for at the pay station on the car park before you go back to your car as there are no payment facilities at the barrier.

Public transport: The following buses stop near City Health Campus:

11A, 11C (Aberdeen St), 80A (Icknield Port Road), 82, 87, 89 (Dudley Rd)

Further information can be found on

[www.networkwestmidlands.com](http://www.networkwestmidlands.com) or by calling 0345 303 6760.

### **Walsall Manor Hospital**

#### **Address**

Breast Unit  
Route 126  
Walsall Manor Hospital  
Moat Road  
WS2 9PS

#### **Telephone**

01922 721172 extension 6404

#### **Walsall Manor Car park charges (July 2024)**

Car parking charges apply, for more information please visit: [www.walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/planning-your-visit/hospital/getting-here](http://www.walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/planning-your-visit/hospital/getting-here)

Public transport: The following buses stop near Walsall Manor Hospital: 36, 39 and 637

Further information can be found on

[www.networkwestmidlands.com](http://www.networkwestmidlands.com) or by calling 0345 303 6760.

## **Remember – Be Breast Aware**

- Know what is normal for you and your breasts
- Look and feel for any changes in your breasts
- Tell your GP about any changes immediately
- Always go for breast screening every three years

## Further Information

### GOV.UK

NHS breast screening (BSP) programme: detailed information.

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/population-screening-programmes/breast>

National Health Service

Breast cancer screening

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/breast-cancer-screening/>

### Breast Cancer Now

Breast cancer symptoms and signs

<https://breastcancer.org/information-support/have-i-got-breast-cancer/signs-symptoms-breast-cancer>

(Websites checked 22 April 2021)

For more information about our breast screening service please see our website

[www.bscren.org.uk/city](http://www.bscren.org.uk/city), follow us on X @CSWBSS and like us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/CSWBSS](http://www.facebook.com/CSWBSS)

## Sources of information used in this leaflet

- Public Health England (2016) *NHS breast screening programme clinical guidance for breast cancer screening assessment*. 4th ed. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/breast-screening-clinical-guidelines-for-screening-management>. (Accessed 09 September 2024).
- Public Health England (2019). *NHS public health functions agreement 2019-20: service specification No 24 NHS breast screening programme*. Available at: [https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Service-Specification-No.24-Breast\\_Screening\\_Programme.pdf](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Service-Specification-No.24-Breast_Screening_Programme.pdf) (Accessed 09 September 2024).

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