

Breast Clinic

PREPARING FOR YOUR ASSESSMENT



Your GP has referred you to one of our breast clinics for assessment. Please check your appointment letter for details of the hospital you need to attend.

You should expect to have a physical examination as part of your assessment, so we suggest you wear something suitable that allows you to easily remove your top for examination.

We aim to carry out as full an assessment as possible during your first clinic visit, so you may be in the hospital for up to three hours if you require investigations detailed in the "Further Tests" section.

Please do not use any deodorant or talcum powder as this may show up on a mammogram that might be required on the day.

If you have long hair, you'll need to wear it, or tie it up for some of the imaging tests.

It is important for us to know what medication you are taking, so please bring a list with you if applicable.

You are welcome to bring a family member or friend with you.

Arrival at hospital

Head towards the Out Patient Department on level one. On arrival at the Out Patient Department please report to Reception A. The reception staff will call you forward to book you in at the reception desk. Once you are booked in, you will be asked to take a seat and await your appointment. Please advise a staff member if you have waited longer than 30 minutes for your appointment.

Breast Clinic Assessment

You will then be invited to have your height and weight taken before being shown in to a clinic room to meet the breast specialist. The breast specialist will ask about your breast problem and your medical history. You should expect to have a breast examination as part of your assessment, and you will be asked to remove your top so the breast specialist can examine your breasts.

Following the examination, the breast specialist may recommend further tests. If you require further tests this will be carried out in x-ray department on the same day.

You will be shown to the x-ray department and you should report to x-ray reception desk which is signposted.

Breast Imaging - with mammography, breast ultrasound, or both will be done in the x-ray department. You will need to undress to the waist again and may be asked to wear a hospital gown.

Mammography - this is a breast x-ray, usually used to gain more information about the pattern of breast tissue in patients over the age of 40 who have new breast problems. Both breasts will usually be x-rayed.

Breast Ultrasound - Ultrasound is very good at looking at small areas of the breast to give information about breast tissue change. Ultrasound will often be used along with mammography to give us a clear overall picture. Ultrasound is used to assess breast change in younger patients in whom mammography may not give a very clear picture.

Tissue Sampling – a biopsy may be required. This does not necessarily mean that there is concern about anything sinister, non-worrying benign conditions may also need a biopsy to make a safe diagnosis. Sometimes tests will be performed with a needle and syringe.

Sometimes a more formal biopsy will be required which will be performed under local anaesthetic. This may happen during breast ultrasound in the x-ray department or back in the breast clinic with the breast specialist. The person performing the biopsy will explain carefully to you what procedure is being performed and why.

Blood tests – a blood sample may be taken as part of the assessment at the clinic.

Once imaging is complete, you will return to the changing room where you can get dressed again. When all the results are available, the x-ray staff will let you know and send you back to the breast specialist.

Results and Follow-Up

You will be asked to return to the breast clinic with your results. The x-ray staff will give you directions on how to return to the breast clinic where you will give the outpatient staff your results envelope.

Breast Imaging will be checked by a second consultant Radiologist within a few days of your appointment and occasionally patients may be called back for further tests after this second read. A letter will be sent to you explaining this if any further tests are required.



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