



PATIENT INFORMATION

Breast Care Services Triple Assessment Appointment

We understand that you may be anxious about this visit. This information has been written to explain how the clinic works.

Why have I been referred to the Breast Care Triple Assessment Clinic?

You have been referred because your GP thinks your symptoms may be caused by cancer.

OR

Your GP is seeking a Breast Specialist's opinion regarding your symptoms.

All new patients to the Breast Service should be seen within two weeks of the referral being received by us.

What does the appointment involve?

The Breast Specialist that you see will decide if any tests are appropriate for the symptoms described by you or your GP, but your initial appointment *may* involve a combination of the following:

1. Clinical examination

A specialist doctor or practitioner will ask you about your symptoms and examine you. The specialist will maybe a male, but a female nurse will also be present.

We can sometimes arrange for a female specialist to be available.

This examination may be all that is required.

2. Mammogram *

An image of the breast using low dose x-rays. A female practitioner will position and compress your breasts, one at a time, in the mammogram machine and take the x-rays.

Mammography only takes a few minutes and your breasts are only compressed for a few seconds each.

This may be a little uncomfortable or even briefly painful but compression is necessary to obtain good quality images.

3. Ultrasound examination *

The use of high frequency sound waves to obtain images of the breast. Gel will be used to help transmit the sound waves then an ultrasound probe will be passed over your breast. This is usually painless.

You may also need one of the following:

- **Fine needle aspiration** a small sample of cells taken from the breast using a thin needle and a syringe, with or without ultrasound guidance.
- **Core Biopsy** following local anaesthetic, small samples of tissue taken from the breast using a needle, with or without image guidance. If this is necessary usually it can be carried out at this appointment or, if you prefer, another appointment can be arranged.

You may also be seen by a Breast Care Nurse for further support or information.

You may bring a friend or relative to sit with you whilst you wait for your appointment. Please do not bring children to your appointment as they will not be allowed into the examination rooms.

The whole visit may require the entire morning/afternoon.

When will I get the Results?

All results are discussed at a weekly multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meeting. (This is usually a Wednesday). You will be contacted by telephone or letter after this meeting with your results if an appointment has not already been arranged.

Most results are available within 9 days.

What is a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meeting?

Your case may be discussed, in confidence, by the breast cancer multidisciplinary team (MDT). This is a well-established group of experts with a specialist role in the diagnosis, treatment and management of people with breast cancer in Torbay.

The team comprises Breast Surgeons, Specialist Nurses, Radiologists, Radiographers, Pathologists, Oncologists and other healthcare professionals. This team meets weekly.

Benefits and Risks

It is important that you understand the benefits and risks of these procedures. The doctor/practitioner will normally talk to you about these but please feel free to ask if you want more information.

**** Subject to availability of Radiologist. If unavailable at your first visit, breast imaging will be performed at a subsequent appointment which will be sent to you in the post.***

If you have any general enquiries about the procedure, please contact the Breast Care Nurse on ☎ (01803) 655634

Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5.00pm

You may be interested to review further information via video which can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/breast-care-unit/support-videos/>