

An introduction to the Breast Clinic – What to expect when you attend the breast clinic at Eastbourne District General Hospital.

Who will I see?

You will be seen by a member of the well-established breast team. The team members include:

Eastbourne District General Hospital
Consultant Breast Surgeons Vacant Position Mr Ash Subramanian Mr Pravin Sangle (Locum)
Consultant Radiologists Dr David Howlett Dr Paula Mckenzie, Dr Ulla Raudsepp
Macmillan Consultant Nurse Lis Grimsey
Trainee Advanced Nurse Practitioner Connie Bowyer
Mammographers Louise Richards, Lauren Head, Aleks Nasir, Naomi Hubbard-Cole, Nancy Lappa, Donna Kamamaty, Rachel Pankhurst, Hema Ponnusami

The Macmillan Breast Clinical Nurse Specialists Heather Driver, Emma Robb and Katy Hollobon are also available to give further advice and support if needed.

What should I do to prepare myself for the appointment?

- If you have any mammogram films at home, please bring them with you.
- You will be asked to undress to the waist, so it would be easier to wear skirt/trousers and a top rather than a dress.

What will happen when I attend for the appointment?

When you arrive, please report to the reception desk in the main entrance. You will be directed to the clinic waiting area. Please take a seat. A clinic nurse will call you into the examination room.

You will be seen by a member of the breast care team. They will take a history from you.

They will then examine your breast and axillae (armpits).

Will I have any other investigations performed?

After the breast examination you may need to have some further tests performed. These may not be done on the same day. These may include:

Mammogram

This is an x-ray of your breast tissue. The radiographer (expert in taking breast x-rays) will ask you to undress to the waist and stand in front of the mammography machine. Each breast is held firmly by two plates so that it is compressed and flattened. Two pictures of each breast will be taken.

Some women may find this uncomfortable or even painful, but it only lasts a few seconds. Mammograms are usually done on women over the age of 40, as younger women's breast tissue is generally too dense to produce a good image.

Ultrasound

An ultrasound scan uses high-frequency sound waves to produce an image of the breast. You will be asked to lie on a couch with your arm above your head. Some gel will be spread on your breast and a scanning probe will be moved around it. It is painless and only takes a few minutes to do. It is the same type of scan used on pregnant women.

This test is more suitable for women under 40 or as an additional test to the mammogram.

Fine Needle Aspiration or Core Biopsy

If a lump or an abnormal area is found during the breast examination, mammogram or ultrasound scan, a sample will be taken. This can be a fine needle aspiration (FNAC) or a core biopsy. Both these tests can be done with or without using ultrasound for guidance.

FNAC: This is a quick and simple test, similar to a blood test. A fine needle is used to draw off cells or fluid. The sample can be sent off to the laboratory where it is looked at under a microscope.

You may find that you develop some mild bruising following the test but this will settle and resolve.

Core Biopsy: A core biopsy uses a larger needle to obtain a sample of tissue. You will be given a local anaesthetic to numb the area. Several samples may be taken at the same time. These samples are sent to the laboratory where they are examined under a microscope.

You may find that your breast aches following the procedure once the anaesthetic wears off and it may be bruised. It may be necessary to take painkillers if the area is tender or painful.

How will I get the results?

A further appointment will be made for you to come back to the clinic for the results and to discuss further management. Alternatively, we may arrange to write to you and your GP with the results.

Should I bring someone with me to the clinic?

You may wish to bring a member of your family or a friend to the clinic with you for support (this advice may change due to COVID restrictions). However, it is advisable not to bring young children with you as they may get bored during the visit, which can last a few hours.

If you are unsure of anything, please ask - we are here to help you.

To contact the Macmillan Breast Clinical Nurse Specialists please telephone 0300 131 4604

Sources of information

Breast Cancer Now:

Helpline: 0808 800 6000 (freephone)

Website: www.breastcancernow.org.uk

Royal College of Radiologists' virtual guide through an x-ray department:

www.goingfora.com

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4731 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand Hygiene

The Trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other Formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: 0300 131 4434 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The Eastbourne Multidisciplinary Breast Team members and the patient support group have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Next review date: July 2025

Responsible clinician: Lis Grimsey, Macmillan Nurse Consultant

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