Tests

These include blood or urine tests and other types of x-rays. It may take several days to organise these and to get the results back. You may need to come back to the outpatient department for the results.

If you would like to make any comments or suggestions about our service, please let us know.

This leaflet is available in large print.

Diagnosis & Treatment

If you require further tests and investigations it may take as long as two or three hours to gather, analyse and discuss the results.

When we have these results available, a member of the Specialist Breast Care Team will discuss these with you and what (if anything), needs to be done.

If you have any questions please ask.

Most patients attending do not have any serious problems with their breasts.

Please be patient with us. Not all patients have the same problems and some take longer to sort out than others.

For further information contact:

Breast Care Nurse
Direct Line (028) 9055 0499

South Eastern HSC Trust
The Ulster Hospital
Dundonald
Belfast
BT16 1RH

Tel (028) 9048 4511

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Developed by Breast Care Nurse
Designed by Communications Department
Welcome to the Ulster Hospital Specialist Breast Clinic. The following information is designed to help you get the best out of your outpatient visit.

These notes will let you know what to expect today and also help us sort out your problem as accurately and quickly as possible. Your doctor has referred you to our Specialist Breast Clinic.

What will happen?

When called by the nurse, you will be asked to get ready for your examination before the doctor sees you.

In the examination room, the doctor will ask you some questions, for example:
- How long have you noticed your problem?
- How many weeks, months or years?
- Has it changed since you first noticed it?
- Have you ever had a mammogram and when was it?

The doctor will ask you to describe in your own words what you have noticed wrong. You will then be examined. Many people can be reassured on the basis of examination alone, however it may be necessary for you to have some tests performed. The doctor will decide which tests you need.

Most of these tests will be done today but it may be necessary for you to come back on another date for further tests. Your visit today may take 2 - 3 hours.

If you cannot wait today please let us know and a more suitable time will be arranged.

If your investigations are completed today a member of our Specialist Breast Care Team will discuss the results with you.

Special Tests

NEEDLE BIOPSY

We may need to put a small needle into the lump or thickening in your breast. By doing this we can draw out liquid or some cells using a syringe. This helps us to find out what the cause of your lump is. It stings for a few moments and is usually a little uncomfortable for a short while but the discomfort soon passes off. There is no need to numb the skin first.

There may be bruising after a day or so, but this will fade away. There is a small risk of damage to the lung tissue during this test (less than 1 in 2000).

If you have any concerns about this needle test or do not wish to proceed with it, please tell the nurse or doctor at the clinic.

If you are taking ASPIRIN, PLAVIX or blood thinning preparations such as WARFARIN it is very important that you let us know before you have any needle test done.

MAMMOGRAM

This is a special x-ray of the breast. We get the best pictures if the breast is placed between the x-ray plates and slight pressure is applied. It can be a little uncomfortable, but it is over in a few minutes. A mammogram does not harm the breast.

ULTRASOUND SCAN

To do an ultrasound scan we cover the skin of the breast with clear gel and run a special probe over the skin. This investigation is painless.