

Needle localization



If you have a questionable area on your mammogram that is seen on your imaging but not felt, you may have a needle localization procedure before your breast biopsy. This procedure helps the surgeon locate the area to be biopsied.

Types of needle localization

You'll have one of four types of needle localization, depending on the abnormality and where it is located in the breast:

- ▲ Mammography
- ▲ Stereotactic technology
- ▲ Ultrasound
- ▲ MRI

What to expect

The steps for all needle localization procedures are generally the same:

- ▲ For MRI- and ultrasound-guided localization, you'll lie on a padded exam table. For stereotactic- and mammography-guided localization, you'll sit in a chair, and the breast will be compressed.
- ▲ Images will be made to visualize the area to be localized.
- ▲ The skin will be cleaned with an antibacterial solution.
- ▲ The radiologist will numb an area of the breast. You'll feel a small stick and slight discomfort as the local anesthetic is injected, which lasts about 10 - 15 seconds.
- ▲ After the skin is numb, you may feel pressure from the mammogram unit or from the needle.
- ▲ A needle will be placed through the numbed area and directed toward the lesion. This is used as a guide for the localization wire.
- ▲ Images will be made with the needle in place to determine accurate placement.
- ▲ The localization wire then will be guided through the needle.
- ▲ When the wire is secure, the needle will be removed, leaving the wire in place.
- ▲ Two final images will be taken to show the wire, which will guide the surgeon during your biopsy.
- ▲ A dressing will be placed over the wire, and you will go to surgery.

Ready to care for you

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