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Vacuum assisted biopsy, an alternative to breast surgery

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Vacuum assisted biopsy, an alternative to breast surgery

Vacuum assisted biopsy (VAB) is a breast biopsy technique that can make surgery unnecessary for diagnosis confirmation and treatment of multiple benign lesions.



Breast biopsy on an outpatient basis

VAB does not require hospital admission or going into the operating room. It is an outpatient technique that is performed under local anaesthesia; it is well tolerated by patients of all ages or with conditions that may pose risks in surgical procedures under general anaesthesia.

Smaller scar and better recovery

VAB uses a needle that is inserted in the breast to aspirate the lesion in multiple fragments. No skin cuts or stitches are necessary, so no scar is left. The recovery time after a VAB procedure is much shorter compared to a surgical procedure so patients resume their normal life activities in just a few days.



What patients are candidates for this procedure?

VAB can be considered as an alternative to a surgical biopsy in three situations:

- > For accurate confirmation of the diagnosis of particular lesions observed in a mammogram, an ultrasound scan or an MRI.
- > When other biopsy techniques (fine needle aspiration cytology or core needle biopsy) have failed to produce a diagnosis.
- > In the treatment of benign lesions very common in women such as fibroadenomas and papillomas (benign tumours that cause nipple discharge).

A multidisciplinary assessment between the radiologist, the pathologist and the surgeon is needed to determine when to proceed with VAB instead of surgery.