For More Information

If you have questions, please feel free to call the Breast Center at 525-7536 from 7 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. To make an appointment, please call the Department of Medical Imaging at 525-1401 between 8 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

Where Do I Need To Go?

St. Peter’s Breast Center is located on the third floor of 317 South Manning Boulevard, Suite 305. For a map and directions, visit www.sphcs.org/mapdirections or call (518) 525-7536.
What is Stereotactic Needle Biopsy?

Stereotactic needle biopsy is a method of removing tissue from an area of concern in the breast using only a needle. We use the most modern in digital, computerized technology to accurately sample the area. The tissue can then be reviewed in the pathology laboratory to determine if the area is innocent (benign) or could represent cancer (suspicious or malignant).

Why Have A Stereotactic Needle Biopsy?

In the past, the only way to tell if a mass was or was not cancer was to obtain a tissue sample with a surgical biopsy, which involves cutting into the breast.

Today, St. Peter’s Breast Center performs a biopsy with the most accurate, image-guided, minimally invasive techniques. A needle biopsy obtains tissue without cutting into or scarring the breast. Since most breast masses are not cancer, the use of breast needle biopsy can help a woman avoid unnecessary surgery. Stereotactic breast needle biopsy is a safe, effective and accurate way to diagnose breast problems. We review the pathology results for ALL of our needle biopsy patients and correlate them with the imaging findings to ensure accuracy.

The procedure is performed using our highly advanced digital biopsy table and special needles for obtaining breast biopsy specimens. We were the first facility in the Capital Region to be fully accredited in all needle biopsy techniques for the breast, including stereotactic needle biopsy.

What Can I Expect?

The procedure will be fully explained to you, and you will have a chance to have any questions about the procedure answered. You will then be asked to sign a consent form to proceed.

You will be lying on your stomach on our stereotactic biopsy table, which is specially designed for breast biopsy only. A radiologist will do the procedure, assisted by a mammography technologist. The area of concern will first be located with digital mammography, and measurements will be taken to ensure that the biopsy can be safely performed. Your skin will be cleaned with surgical soap, and the breast will be numbed with lidocaine (similar to that used for dental procedures). A tiny skin opening is made to insert the needle, and its position will be continuously checked with digital imaging. A number of samples will be taken from the area to ensure that enough tissue is made available to the pathologist. At the end of the procedure, an ice pack will be applied to the biopsy site to minimize bleeding. When the procedure is complete, a dressing will be placed on the skin and you will be given instructions on the care of the biopsied area.

The entire procedure can take as little as one hour. After the procedure, you may have some soreness or a bruise, and you will need to avoid strenuous activity for the rest of the day.

How Do I Prepare?

It is extremely important that you inform the technologists or radiologist if you have any allergies, have any bleeding problems or are taking medications. If you regularly take aspirin or other medications that can promote bleeding, we need to know in advance of the procedure. For example, if you are taking Courmadin® (warfarin), we may have to modify the procedure.