What to expect from your needle localization procedure

Your surgeon has requested a needle localization procedure prior to your breast biopsy to ensure that your area of concern is sampled accurately. Because we care about your comfort, we have listed some helpful guidelines that will help you to prepare for this procedure. Please read this carefully before you arrive. Should you have any questions in the meantime, please don’t hesitate to call one of our women’s imaging nurses at (717) 812-3763.

1. Please wear a VERY loose fitting, preferably button-up or zipper-up, top with pants. During the procedure, you will be placed in a gown for easy access. During the COLD winter months we also strongly suggest a larger, loose-fitting jacket to keep you warm and comfortable.

2. During the needle localization procedure we will place in your breast a needle with an internal hook-wire which will be fixed to the skin with tape. This needle will serve as a guide for the surgeon performing your procedure. A BREAST BIOPSY GUARD will likely be placed over the needle and hook-wire to ensure stability and protection. The guard will take up some space in your clothing.

3. Following this part of your needle localization procedure, you MAY require transportation to Apple Hill Medical Center for the surgical procedure. If this is necessary, we will assist you. We will make every attempt to ensure your comfort and privacy during this time. When you arrive at the surgical center, the escorting nurse will accompany you to the pre-op area.

4. Please remember not to drink or eat after midnight and take only those medications recommended by your referring physician or surgical center staff.

5. The risks of the procedure include: bleeding, dislodging of the needle, pneumothorax (collapsed lung), infection and allergic reaction.

6. We encourage family, friends and loved-ones to lend their support during this procedure. If your surgical procedure is to be performed at Apple Hill Medical Center, persons accompanying you may travel with you or they may proceed directly to Apple Hill Medical Center to find a parking space and join you in the pre-operative area.

Important information regarding the day of your exam:
If you are having a Mammographic or Ultrasound Needle Localization:

You will begin the day in the women’s imaging suite (Suite 201), located in the WellSpan Women’s Center. The center is located on the Apple Hill Health Campus in York (see map and driving directions).

When you enter the main reception area of the Women’s Center, you will be greeted by a WellSpan employee and instructed to turn left into the women’s imaging suite, Suite 201. Since you will have been pre-registered 24-48 hours prior to your procedure, you may simply inform the receptionist that you have arrived for your needle localization procedure.

Next, you will be greeted by one of our women’s imaging nurses and escorted to the pre-op area. You will then change into the appropriate gown and be escorted into the room for either mammographic or ultrasound localization.

Mammographic localization – A technologist may take several pictures prior to the start of the procedure. You will sit during this procedure. The doctor will then enter the room and begin by cleansing the area for localization with antiseptic. Next, a small needle will be utilized to place local anesthesia (numbing medicine) directly in the area. This will cause a slight burning sensation. Next, the needle and hook-wire will be placed and several additional pictures will be taken in different positions. When the procedure is complete, a breast biopsy guard and tape will be placed to secure the system for your safety during transport to the Apple Hill Medical Center, which is located on the same campus. The nurse will then accompany you to the covered entrance and continue to escort you into a vehicle, which will be waiting and warmed up for your comfort. In the summer months the vehicle will be properly air-conditioned.

Ultrasound localization – Prior to the start of the procedure, a technologist will scan the area of interest. You will lay on your back for this procedure. The doctor will then enter the room and begin by repeating the scan. He or she will cleanse the area for localization with antiseptic. Next, a small needle will be utilized to place local anesthesia (numbing medicine) directly in the area. This will cause a slight burning sensation. Next, the needle and hook-wire will be placed. You may need a mammogram following the needle placement. When the procedure is complete, a guard and tape will be placed to secure the system for your safety during transport to the Apple Hill Medical Center, which is located on the same campus. The nurse will then accompany you to the covered entrance and continue to escort you into a vehicle, which will be waiting and warmed up for your comfort. In the summer months the vehicle will be properly air-conditioned.

If you are having an MRI localization:

MRI LOCALIZATION DIFFERS FROM MAMMOGRAPHY AND ULTRASOUND. An IV will be placed in your hand or arm at the start of the procedure. Your breast will be cleansed with antiseptic solution and you will be placed on the MRI table face down. It is important that you remain very still during this localization process.

Your breast will be placed in slight compression and a series of MRI pictures will be taken. A small needle will be utilized to place local anesthesia (numbing medicine) directly in the area. This will cause a slight burning sensation. Next, the needle and hook-wire will be placed. When the procedure is complete, the needle will be secured with a dressing. If the surgery is to be performed at York Hospital, the nurse will accompany you to the short stay unit. You may request that a family member or a friend transport you in their vehicle. If you do not arrange transportation, we will provide transportation in an ambulance.
Important information regarding all procedures (Mammography, Ultrasound and MRI):

Your surgeon may request the placement of BLUE DYE through the localization needle to assist in the operation. This will occur at the end of the procedure and prior to the placement of the tape and guard. This may cause a slight, quick burning sensation.

All of the dedicated technologists, nurses and doctors of York Hospital’s Imaging Services thank you for choosing us to perform your needle localization procedure. We are pleased to assist your surgeon and it is our hope that your experience is a positive one.

If you have any questions regarding your localization procedure, please feel free to contact one of our women’s imaging nurses at (717) 812-3763.

Directions to the Apple Hill Health Campus (for patients having a mammographic or ultrasound needle localization.)

If you are entering from George Street onto Monument Road, take the SECOND right into the Apple Hill Health Campus. Follow signs marked “WOMEN’S CENTER.”

1  WellSpan Women’s Center
2  Apple Hill Medical Center