

Patient information

Breast Clinic Outpatients

Introduction

This clinic has been set up to give patients with breast problems access to specialist doctors, nurses and investigations, so that a diagnosis can be made. The majority of patients are found to have benign (non-cancerous) breast disease and can be reassured and discharged. Patients who have cancer can be advised about their disease promptly and start treatment as quickly as possible. All members of the team are very willing to answer any questions you may have.

Staff that you may meet

- **A specialist doctor or surgical nurse practitioner** who will examine you and advise you as to whether you need any further investigations.
- **Breast Care Nurses** who can explain investigations and diagnoses.
- **Mammographers** who take breast x-rays, who are specialised radiographers, will be met by some patients.
- **Radiologists** who perform ultrasound scans which give additional information to that seen on a mammogram. They also perform any breast biopsy tests for further diagnostic information which are examined under a microscope by a **Pathologist**.
- **Clinic nurses** who are here to guide and support you through the initial stages of your visit.
- **Volunteers** who will escort you to anywhere else you need to go.

We are unable to guarantee you will always see the same doctor should you need to be seen again at future clinic appointments. The doctors who work in the Breast Clinic are all part of the Breast Care team.

What happens at Breast Clinic

You will discuss your breast problem with a doctor or a surgical nurse practitioner, who will then examine you and arrange any investigations if necessary. **Some patients may have to have their investigations done on another day.** Not all patients will need all of the investigations and some may not need any.

You may also meet one of the breast care nurses/clinic nurses who will explain the investigations and diagnoses.

Further investigations that may be required

Further investigations that may be required could prolong your clinic visit from one to two hours. These may include:

- **Mammogram** – is an x-ray of the breasts. This involves briefly compressing each breast.
- **Ultra-sound scan** – after gel has been put on the breast, a special probe is rubbed gently over the breast. This gives additional information to help distinguish what type of lump it is.
- **Aspiration of simple cysts** - cysts may be drained by using a fine needle.
- **Needle biopsy** – a test performed by a doctor or specialised mammographer, when small samples of tissue are taken from the breast using a special needle. A local anaesthetic is used to numb the breast first.

Very important

Please bring **any** breast x-rays (mammograms) that you have in your possession to clinic with you, including: NHS Breast Screening, BUPA or other private mammograms.

Do not use talcum powder or spray-on deodorant as these can make it difficult to read the mammograms. Be prepared to spend up to two hours at the clinic. If you would like to bring someone with you, please feel free to do so.

Student in training may be present at your clinic appointment. If for any reason you would prefer not to have one present when you are seen, please inform the reception staff on your arrival.

You may be required to return to the clinic to receive the results of your tests. The appointment date will be given to you immediately after your investigations.

We hope to have your results available in one week. Sometimes due to workload this is not always possible and you may be contacted to change your appointment.

If you have concerns please contact:

The Breast Care Nursing Team

Telephone on 01284 713281

Monday - Friday 8:30am – 4.00pm

Donations In support of our work may be made to the West Suffolk Hospital Breast Cancer Fund.

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is actively involved in clinical research. Your doctor, clinical team or the research and development department may contact you regarding specific clinical research studies that you might be interested in participating in. If you do not wish to be contacted for these purposes, please email info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk. This will in no way affect the care or treatment you receive.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo)
<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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