

- Blue dye might discolour urine to a green colour temporarily (approximately 24hrs).
- The breast skin might be discoloured for up to a few months and very occasionally a year or so.
- The dye used in the injection can make people grey in colour for up to 12 hours.
- Whilst under an anaesthetic allergic reaction to the blue dye seldom occurs. Should this happen it is very rarely severe and can be treated.

- Are allergic to any medicines, including any anaesthetics or dyes.
- Have had bleeding problems or take blood-thinners, such as aspirin, warfarin or Clopidogrel.
- Have had a biopsy in the past.
- Have had radiation treatment to the biopsy site.

How long will it take to get the results from my sentinel node biopsy?

When the sentinel nodes are removed, they are analysed by a pathologist under the microscope. Usually a result will be obtained within two weeks of the operation. Occasionally special tests are required on the sentinel node which may take longer. We will tell you the results of the sentinel node biopsy as soon as possible – and may recommend further treatment based on these results.

How do I Prepare for a Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy?

Please tell your doctor if you:

- Are or might be pregnant.
- Are taking any medicines.

What if I have further questions about Sentinel Node Biopsy?

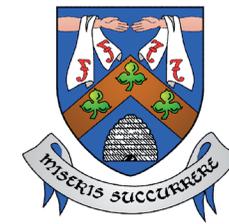
You can feel free to ask your consultant, the breast care nurse or any one of the doctors or nurses involved in your care about sentinel node biopsy. Your Sentinel Lymph Node injection is booked to take place on

Date: ___/___/_____ Time: ____:_____

Date of Surgery: ___/___/_____

Please check in at reception in the Radiology Department. If you have any concerns regarding the appointment please contact the staff in the nuclear medicine department on Tel: 01 8092806.

Issued date: Sept. 2012- Reviewed Aug 2019, June 2021
 Review Date: June 2024
 Author(s): Breast Care Team Approved by: Breast Care Team



Beaumont Hospital



Patient Information
on

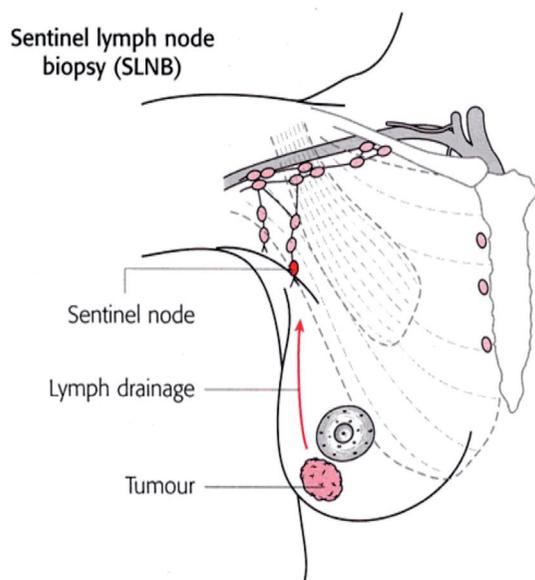
Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy



What is Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy?

A sentinel lymph node biopsy (SLNB) is an operation that takes out lymph node tissue to look for cancer. A sentinel node biopsy is used to see if a breast cancer has spread from the original cancer site. A sentinel node biopsy may be done instead of a more extensive surgery called lymph node dissection. But if cancer is found in the sentinel lymph node, more surgery may be needed to remove additional lymph nodes.

The sentinel lymph node (SLN) is the first node in a group of nodes in the body where cancer is likely to spread from the breast cancer. For example, the sentinel node for breast cancer is normally one of the lymph nodes under the arm.



What are Lymph Glands/Nodes?

The lymphatic system is a system of lymph vessels and lymph glands throughout the body which play an important role in your body's mechanism of fighting infection and tumours. The lymph glands responsible for the breast lie mainly within the armpit (axilla), but occasionally may be within the chest or neck.

How is the Sentinel Lymph Node Identified?

The sentinel lymph node is identified using a combination of the two methods below. You will be asleep for the surgical removal. The imaging and blue dye injection only show where the sentinel node is located and not whether it contains tumour cells or not.

1. *Sentinel Node Imaging:* This is usually done on the day before or on the morning of your operation within the nuclear medicine department. A small amount of radioactive material is injected into the outer aspects of the nipple areola complex (the darker areas of nipple). This material is carried into the armpit by the lymph vessels and trapped in the sentinel node, which can be seen on a nuclear medicine scan and gamma pulse test bed.
2. *Blue Dye Injection:* This is injected once you are asleep in the operating theatre. This dye stains the sentinel node blue, thereby assisting the surgeon to find the correct lymph node. The blue dye may be visible around your scar following surgery,

but usually fades over the following weeks or months. Some of the blue dye passes into your bloodstream and is passed out in the urine. This doesn't usually cause any problems.

A hand held probe guides your surgeon to the radioactive material injected previously.

Once the sentinel node is located, the surgeon makes a small incision in the skin overlying the sentinel node and then removes 1- 3 nodes.

What are the advantages of Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy?

Sentinel lymph node biopsy is an accurate way of determining your disease. It is a significantly smaller operation than axillary node clearance resulting in:

- A smaller scar
- Less discomfort, pain
- Earlier mobility in the shoulder/arm.
- Lower risk of lymphoedema (arm swelling).
- No drains
- Shorter hospital stay and quicker overall recovery

What are the disadvantages of sentinel lymph node biopsy?

- Stinging sensation and discomfort when the radioactive fluid is injected into the breast. Local anaesthetic cream may be applied to the skin prior to the procedure to help prevent this.