

If cancer is found (positive), more lymph nodes will be removed to check for additional areas of cancer. The surgeon will go on to do an axillary clearance as part of the same operation.

## WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER THE SENTINEL LYMPH NODE BIOPSY?

- ✓ Small amounts of radioactive tracer and blue dye that are used will disappear from your system in 24-28 hours.
- ✓ The blue dye usually disappears from the breast within a few days, but sometimes it stains the breast for a longer time.
- ✓ Your urine will turn blue-green for about 24 hours

THE BLUE DYE AND RADIOACTIVE SOLUTION ARE BOTH SAFE AND WILL CAUSE NO HARM.

# SENTINEL LYMPH NODE BIOPSY

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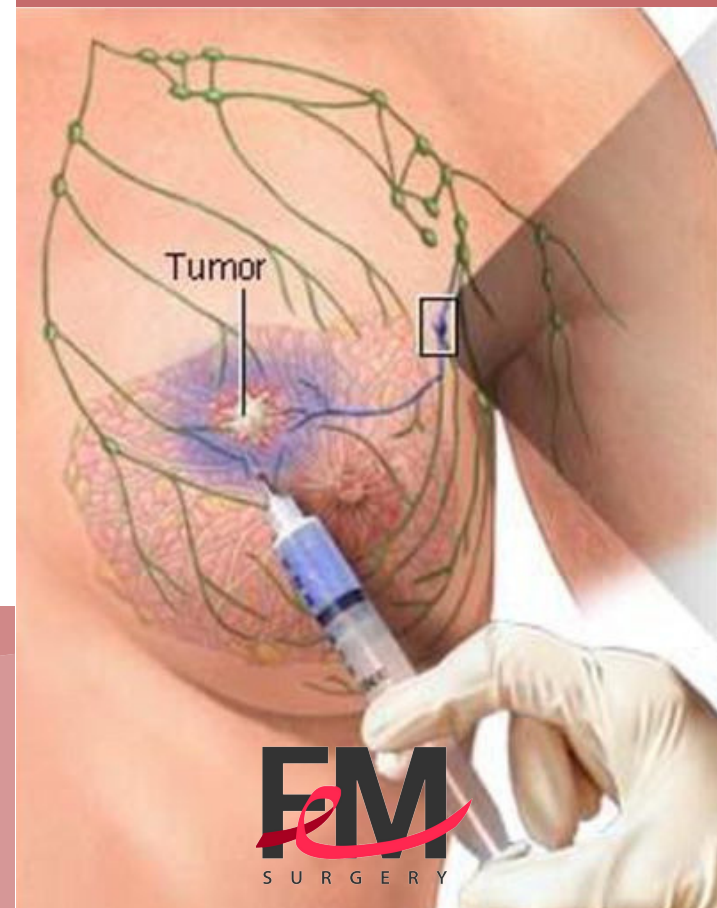
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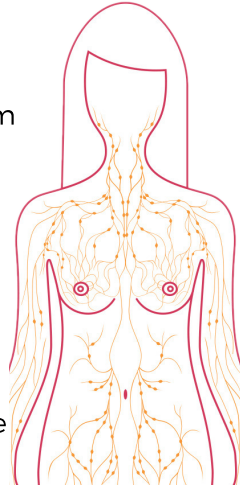
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# OVERVIEW

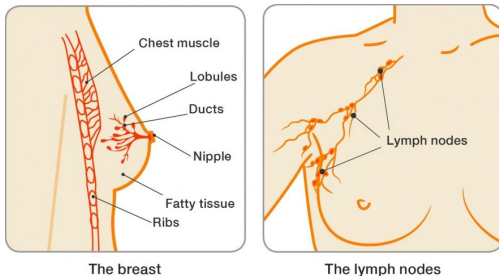
Breast cancer can spread from the breast in a number of ways. One of the ways is for the breast cancer cells to enter tiny channels called **lymphatic channels**. These lymphatic channels carry lymphatic fluid to areas of the body called **lymph nodes**.



## WHAT IS A SENTINEL NODE BIOPSY?

A sentinel lymph node biopsy (SLNB) pinpoints the first few lymph nodes into which a tumor drains (the "sentinel" node). It is a procedure in which the sentinel lymph node is identified, removed, and examined to determine whether cancer cells are present.

In breast cancer, the sentinel node is usually located in the **axillary nodes**, under the arm.



SENTINEL LYMPH NODE BIOPSY IS RAPIDLY BECOMING THE GOLD STANDARD OF CARE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF EARLY BREAST CANCER SO AS TO PREVENT UNNECESSARY AXILLARY CLEARANCE.

In a small percentage of cases, other lymph nodes that can be involved in breast cancer include lymph nodes located above the collarbone and lymph nodes behind the breast bone.

## HOW IS IT DONE?

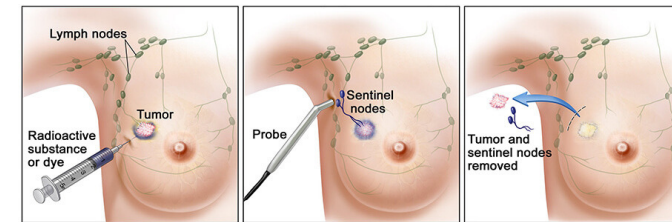
The sentinel lymph node is identified, or "mapped" using a combination of two techniques. These techniques aim to help the surgeon find the sentinel node for removal during the operation.

### RADIOACTIVE SOLUTION

- Performed a few hours before surgery at the nuclear medicine department.
- A small amount of **radioactive tracer** is injected either around the cancer or under the nipple. This solution is taken up by your lymphatic system and travels from the cancer site to the sentinel nodes.
- The injection of tracer makes the sentinel node radioactive so the surgeon can use the **gamma probe** to find it during the operation.

### BLUE DYE TEST

- Performed at the beginning of the operation.
- After you have been put to sleep, a small amount of **blue dye** is injected into your breast.
- Your lymphatic system delivers the dye to the sentinel nodes, staining them bright blue.



## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SENTINEL LYMPH NODE IS IDENTIFIED?

A pathologist uses a microscope to look at the axillary lymph nodes removed during surgery to check if they contain cancer cells.

If no cancer is found in the sentinel node (**negative**), it may not be necessary to remove additional nodes. No further treatment to the armpit is required.

SENTINEL LYMPH NODE BIOPSY IS A MINIMALLY INVASIVE TECHNIQUE.