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Lumpectomy

Your medical doctor or surgeon has recommended that you have a lumpectomy. This procedure is used when a woman has a lump in her breast that needs to be removed, along with lymph nodes in some cases. This is also called a "wide excision". This is often recommended for women with a small lump, and the normal tissue around it is left in place.

You will be asked to come to the hospital about 2 hours before you are to have the surgery. You will be given anesthesia to keep you free from pain during the procedure. The surgeon will make a small incision in your breast and remove the lump and a small surrounding area of tissue. Your surgeon may remove some of the nearby axillary (arm pit area) lymph nodes. A second small incision may be needed in order to do this. The tissue is sent to the pathology department for diagnosis.

The surgeon will then place a few sutures in the skin to close the wound. If you had lymph nodes removed, a drain may be placed under your arm to collect any fluid that builds up. A dressing will then be applied and you will leave the operating room.

The surgery takes about one to two hours. Some people may need to stay a few days in the hospital, and others may go home the same day. Please leave the dressing on for 24 hours following surgery. It is also a good idea to wear a well fitting bra to give the breast some support. See reverse side for postoperative suggestions. Also, you may be shown arm exercises at the hospital to restore range of movement to your arm.

You will need to return to your surgeon's office for suture removal about one week after the biopsy. Suture removal is quick and painless. Also, if you have a drain, it will be removed at this time. After that, you may notice a lump at the surgical site. This is scar tissue and will fade away within a few weeks. You may be asked to return for another examination or mammogram about six months after the surgery to assure the breast has returned to normal.

If you do not hear from our office within 48 hours of your surgery, please call us for biopsy results. Please be aware that sometimes pathology takes a little longer. This is no reason to be alarmed.

If at anytime you have concerns, please call our office.