The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Radial scar of the breast

Information for patients

Introduction

This leaflet aims to give you more information about a radial scar of the breast.

A radial scar is also known as a radial sclerosing lesion or complex sclerosing lesion. A radial scar is not cancer. It is a benign (non-cancerous) lesion of the breast made up of scar-like tissue, ducts and glandular cells.

Radial scars are usually found by breast examination (feeling the breast). They are usually seen on mammograms (x-ray of the breast) usually in woman aged between 40 - 60 years.

The radial scar can look like breast cancer on the mammogram and sometimes early cancer changes can be found within the radial scar which is why we always investigate further.

Leeds Radiology

Investigations

To investigate a radial scar further it is usual to arrange more tests such a core biopsy or a vacuum assisted biopsy (sometimes called a mammotome biopsy). The nurse will tell you more about these procedures. Sometimes the vacuum assisted biopsy can remove the radial scar completely. The tissue removed by the vacuum assisted biopsy or core biopsy allows the specialists to assess the radial scar fully. This will tell them what or if any treatment or follow up is needed.

Surgical removal may be considered based on the results of previous tests or the size of the radial scar. The larger it is the more likely the specialist will advise removal of the radial scar.

If your radial scar was found on breast screening you may get your results at the screening assessment unit or a referral to the breast surgeon is arranged. The results of the vacuum assisted or core biopsy are given at your hospital outpatient appointment.

If any other treatments or investigations are needed you will be informed of this when you get your vacuum assisted or core biopsy results.

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