



## Clients in Winnipeg with a potential breast abscess should:

1. **Go to an emergency department** (at SBGH, GGH, or HSC).
2. **Be clinically assessed by a physician.**
  - If clinical impression is mastitis/cellulitis
    - i. Client can be **started on a course of antibiotics**, which may be oral or IV depending on severity.
  - If clinical impression is possible breast abscess
    - i. Client should be **assessed by a surgeon at the institution** for a possible incision and drainage, in the OR.
  - If clinical impression is less than an obvious breast abscess
    - i. Refer for a **semi-urgent breast ultrasound** at the Breast Health Centre (BHC) or Radiology Consultants. This may take a few weeks to be performed.
    - ii. If an **urgent ultrasound is required to determine the diagnosis - then a “soft-tissue ultrasound” or an ultrasound at the point-of-care at the emergency department** could be performed.
  - If clinical impression is a possible inflammatory breast cancer (signs and symptoms are generally **not** painful and often associated with suspicious axillary adenopathy)
    - i. **One course of antibiotics** should be given.
    - ii. **Mammogram** ordered (simultaneously) at a mammography site (Radiology Consultants of Winnipeg, Manitoba X-Ray Clinic or Health Sciences Centre) if client is 35 years of age or older .
    - iii. **Refer for a clinical breast exam by a surgeon** at the BHC if client is less than 35 years of age and provided an acute breast abscess is ruled out.
    - iv. **Refer for an urgent breast ultrasound** at the BHC if not already directly referred from a mammogram site and provided the clinical history and assessment substantiate this provisional diagnosis.
  - If client has chronic recurring breast infection (may present as a fistula)
    - i. Start oral **antibiotics**.
    - ii. Order **mammogram** if client is 35 years of age or older.
    - iii. **Refer to BHC** where client will be booked and assessed on a non-urgent basis.

The Breast Health Centre does not provide emergency services or services for acute infection of the breast. We provide appointment-based services for the rapid diagnosis of breast cancer.