What to Expect at your First Breast Appointment

Many women are very apprehensive to come to a surgeon when they have a concern about their breast. Sometimes knowing what to expect at the visit will help alleviate some of the anxiety and make the visit less stressful and more productive. At Bluestone Advanced Surgery we tailor each visit to suit the needs of the individual patient but in general a typical visit for a breast concern will be similar to what is described below.

You will come to the office and check in just like any other office. It will help if you come 20 minutes early in order to fill out paperwork. If you can review the Info Sheet on “Questions the Doctor May Ask You During Your Visit and FAQs” it will help you get through the paperwork more quickly and accurately.

You will be taken back to an exam room and have your vital signs checked. Usually we don’t have you undress right away because most women find it more comfortable to talk to a doctor with their clothes on! The surgeon will meet with you and discuss your concerns, medical history, breast history, and family history. Then the doctor will step out ask you to change into a gown for the breast exam. The breast exam may or may not include an ultrasound of the breast at that time.

After the exam the doctor will talk with you about what should be done next. This may include a biopsy in the office (this is generally not done the same day and will be scheduled as soon as possible), referral for an ultrasound or mammogram in the radiology department, planning for surgery, or possibly a course of observation with recheck in the office at a later time. Feel free to ask any questions you might have. Usually an initial appointment without a biopsy will take about a half-hour.

If you have a known diagnosis of breast cancer (with biopsy results) before your first appointment, the appointment may take up to 1.5 hours as there will be much more to discuss regarding surgery and other treatment options. The decision regarding surgery and the type of surgery is a major decision, and can be overwhelming at first, but we will discuss all these options with you. We prefer to give you time to consider your options before making that decision; you do not need to decide on that day, you can call us back once you have made your decision.