

A webpage for healthcare providers and patients answers questions about vacuum assisted biopsy

- The part addressed to the general public answers questions such as what is a vacuum assisted biopsy? What are the advantages of vacuum assisted biopsy versus surgery? Is it a painful procedure? Or does it leave a scar?
- One of the feature sections is 'Find out more', in which experts give further information about the diagnosis and non-surgical treatment of breast lesions explaining it in a video and a leaflet.
- Healthcare providers are required to fill in a simple registration form to access highly qualified information.
- The webpage has been endorsed by the SEDIM (*Sociedad Española de Diagnóstico por Imagen de la Mama* – Spanish Society for Breast Imaging Diagnostics)

Madrid, July 11th, 2017. BARD's webpage www.crbard.com/vab-guide has kicked off with a goal to spread knowledge of the advantages of vacuum assisted procedures, or vacuum assisted biopsy, among healthcare providers and the general public. This technique means a significant development in the diagnosis and treatment of breast lesions, and still remains relatively unknown.

Vacuum assisted breast biopsy (VABB) and vacuum assisted breast excision (VABE) are much less aggressive than traditional techniques used to remove breast tissue samples as they are conducted through a small cut in the skin. These procedures result in significantly less surgical injury to the breast as well as a reduction of complication risks and a much faster patient recovery.

Using these modern techniques, a much larger tissue sample is obtained compared to the standard core needle biopsy, and so the diagnostic certainty is increased.

Information addressed to patients

Part of the new website is dedicated to providing the public with accurate and specialized information in clear, direct and precise style. Using a question-answer format, it aims at helping patients make choices when facing the need to assess or diagnose a potential breast lesion.

The specialists who have developed the webpage have put themselves in the shoes of the patients, asking themselves, and answering, questions like: What is a vacuum assisted biopsy? What are the advantages of vacuum assisted biopsy versus surgery? What are the differences between vacuum assisted biopsy and other needle breast biopsies? Is it a painful procedure? Does it leave a scar? How long does the procedure take? etc.

Another interesting section of the webpage is 'Share your experience', featuring testimonials from people who have already been through this intervention. Their conclusions after being subject to these procedures are that they are painless (barely a slight prick is felt) and, most importantly, they leave no sequelae.

Also especially interesting is the section 'Find your clinic', which showcases data from the Spanish centers where the vacuum assisted breast biopsy is performed.

Read more

In 'Read more' experts provide further information on subjects which may raise a special interest among patients. For example, the BBAV and its uses, benign breast disorders, and breast cyst management are explained in layman's terms.

This section includes an animated video which, in scarcely a minute, shows how the vacuum assisted biopsy is done. Viewers can also download or print a leaflet with information.

Vab-guide will be regularly brought up to date in a constant development process. It also has Facebook and LinkedIn pages, as well as a blog, which will be channels for spreading information on healthy habits, tips and recommendations. The contents provided in this webpage have been endorsed by the SEDIM (*Sociedad Española de Diagnóstico por Imagen de la Mama* – Spanish Society for Breast Imaging Diagnostics).

Information addressed to healthcare providers

In addition, the webpage includes a private space for healthcare workers, who are required to fill in a simple registration form to access specialized information. In this part of the web, highly qualified professionals answer the main questions healthcare workers are likely to ask, dispelling potential doubts about the vacuum assisted procedures: What is the best option to treat fibroadenomas? What are the risks for patients considering the vacuum assisted breast biopsy or excision? What questions must be asked to patients before a breast biopsy? Or who are the patients eligible for vacuum assisted breast biopsy and excision?

Another feature section of the webpage, the 'VAB Observatory', lists all the main reports published about vacuum assisted biopsy both in Spanish and international scientific journals. The subsection 'Useful materials' contains very helpful videos for clinical practice; explaining, for example, percutaneous excision of fibroadenomas or intraductal lesions.

The 'Virtual classroom' will prove an especially attractive section for healthcare providers as it offers training courses set up by healthcare professionals who are well-known experts on these techniques. All the information about the training courses and registration requirements is available in the webpage, or additional information can also be requested filling out a form at the 'Contact us' section.

Vacuum assisted techniques

Two options are set forth in the Guide of indications of vacuum assisted techniques: biopsy and excision. Vacuum assisted techniques are a relatively new development in the diagnosis and treatment of breast lesions. Although employing the same basic technique, two different kinds of indication can be defined: on the one hand, there are the diagnostic indications, in which vacuum assisted biopsy (VAB) is the fitting term to be applied; on the other hand, lesion removal therapies are subsumed under the term vacuum assisted excision (VAE).

Both kinds of procedure use the same special device to remove breast tissue samples through a small cut in the skin. In short, they allow removal of a larger sample compared to a standard core needle, therefore increasing the diagnostic certainty.

The goal of VAE is the complete removal of the lesion as an alternative approach to surgical excision. Since this technique is much less invasive and costly than the open surgery biopsy, it can be deemed a significant improvement.

VAB and VAE use vacuum aspiration plus a rotating scalpel blade to remove the tissue sample. This approach affords good histological results, even in higher density lesions in which core needle biopsy obtains inconsistent results. Moreover, VAB does not necessarily involve the device firing and the needle being 'thrust forward', therefore reducing the odds of complications in lesions located near the chest wall or big vessels.

Panel of experts

This webpage super-specialized information has been put together by a group of experts including, among others, Dr. Mercedes Torres, coordinator of the Women's Radiology Unit at *Hospital Universitario Puerta del Sur*, HM Group (Móstoles, Madrid, Spain), and Dr. Steven Wolberink, a specialist in Breast Radiology from the Alexander Monro Breast Cancer Hospital (Bilthoven, The Netherlands).

For more information and arrangement of interviews:

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