Breast Abscess

What is a breast abscess?
An abscess is a collection of infected fluid.

How is an abscess diagnosed?
We use breast ultrasound to check for an abscess. We have scheduled an ultrasound in Mammography, on the first floor of NC Cancer Hospital.

What will happen after my ultrasound?
If you have an abscess, you will see a breast surgery specialist today. They see patients in the Surgical Oncology Clinic on the 2nd floor of the NC Cancer Hospital. The breast specialist may recommend doing an operation or draining the abscess with a thin needle.

If the ultrasound does not show an abscess, come back to OB clinic with your radiology report to meet with your OB provider.

Can I breastfeed with an abscess?
It is safe for your baby to breastfeed while you have a breast infection. The bacteria that cause mastitis are usually from your baby’s nose and mouth. If you have surgery, you can still breastfeed. Put a bandage over the incision during feeding or pumping. It’s important to empty the breast regularly to prevent engorgement.

What pain medications are safe during breastfeeding?
It’s safe to take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 650-1000 mg every 4 to 6 hours (but no more than 4000 mg – or 8 extra-strength pills – per day) or Ibuprofen (Motrin) 400-600 mg every 6 hours.

Who should I call with questions?
If you have questions after seeing the breast surgery team, page 919-216-1040.

If you do not see the breast surgery team, call the OB nurse advice line at 919-966-6823. After hours, call 966-4131 and ask for the gynecology resident on call.

If you have any concerns about breastfeeding, pumping or milk supply, call the LC Warm Line at 984-974-8078 or 866-428-5608.