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Your Breast Pathology Report: Atypical Hyperplasia

Biopsy samples taken from your breast are studied by a doctor with special training, called a **pathologist**. After testing the samples, the pathologist creates a report on what was found. Your doctors will use this report to help manage your care.

- [What is hyperplasia?](#)
- [Atypical ductal hyperplasia \(ADH\)](#)
- [Atypical lobular hyperplasia \(ALH\)](#)
- [Benign \(non-cancerous\) breast changes](#)
- [Microcalcifications or calcifications](#)
- [E-cadherin](#)
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The information here is meant to help you understand some of the medical terms you might see in your pathology report after [abreast biopsy¹](#), which might be a needle biopsy or a surgical (open) biopsy.

In a **needle biopsy**, a hollow needle is used to remove samples from an abnormal area in your breast. In some situations, a surgical biopsy might be needed. This can be either an **incisional biopsy**

lobules (where milk is made). [Hyperplasia](#)³ is a term used when there is growth of cells within the ducts and/or lobules of the breast that is not cancer.

Normally, the ducts and lobules are lined by 2 layers of cells. Hyperplasia means that there are more cells than usual, and they are no longer lined up in just the 2 layers.

most cases, unless there's another reason to remove more nearby tissue.

If ALH is found by an excisional biopsy, typically no further treatment is needed.

Because having ALH increases your risk of breast cancer later on, your doctor may

pathologist looks at the tissue removed to be sure that it contains calcifications. If the calcifications are there, the treating physician knows that the biopsy sampled the correct area (the abnormal area seen on the mammogram).

E-cadherin

E-cadherin is a test that might be used to help determine if the hyperplasia is ductal or lobular. (The cells in atypical lobular hyperplasia are usually negative for E-cadherin.) If your report does not mention E-cadherin, it means that this test wasn't needed to figure out which type of hyperplasia you have.

Other lab tests that might be done on breast samples

- High molecular weight cytokeratin (HMWCK)
- CK903
- CK5/6
- p63
- Muscle specific actin
- Smooth muscle myosin heavy chain
- Calponin
- Keratin

These are special tests that are sometimes used to help diagnose different types of breast lesions. Whether your report does or does not mention these tests has no bearing on the accuracy of your diagnosis.

Hyperlinks

1. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/screening-tests-and-early-detection/breast-biopsy.html
2. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/treatment/surgery-for-breast-cancer/breast-conserving-surgery-lumpectomy.html
3. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/non-cancerous-breast-conditions/hyperplasia-of-the-breast-ductal-or-lobular.html
4. www.cancer.org/cancer/diagnosis-staging/tests/biopsy-and-cytology-tests/understanding-your-pathology-report/breast-pathology/ductal-carcinoma-in-situ.html

5. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/risk-and-prevention/can-i-lower-my-risk.html
6. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/risk-and-prevention/deciding-whether-to-use-medicine-to-reduce-breast-cancer-risk.html
7. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/risk-and-prevention/can-i-lower-my-risk.html
8. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/risk-and-prevention/deciding-whether-to-use-medicine-to-reduce-breast-cancer-risk.html
9. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/non-cancerous-breast-conditions.html

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Written by

The American Cancer Society medical and editorial content team
(<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/acs-medical-content-and-news-staff.html>)

Our team is made up of doctors and oncology certified nurses with deep knowledge of cancer care as well as editors and translators with extensive experience in medical writing.

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