

Key reference source(s)

- Part of this information has been compiled using literature from Cancer Research UK
- www.cancerresearchuk.org/

In the case of an emergency, the on-call Maxillofacial Surgeon may be contacted through the hospital switchboard – 01483 571122

For further information or advice, contact the Day Surgery Unit - **01483 406783**
Monday-Friday, 8am – 6pm

- NHS Choices
www.nhs.co.uk

These notes will not cover everything.
If you want to know more, please ask.

Notes

For Further Information and Advice contact:

Day Surgery Unit: 01483 406783

Surgical Short Stay Unit: 01483 406828

Pre assessment Clinic: 01483 464152

Out of Hours Advice: Call 111 (formerly NHS Direct)

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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Excision of Lipoma



Day Surgery Surgical Short Stay

What is a Lipoma?

A lipoma is a growth or lump made up of fat cells. It is benign, ie non-cancerous, and therefore completely harmless. Lipomas may occur anywhere on the body but are most commonly found under the skin of the trunk, upper back and inner arm

It is not known what causes lipomas to appear, but they often run in families.

What are the alternatives?

Lipomas are completely harmless and frequently require no treatment at all. Surgery is considered if the lump is. In rare cases, lipomas form around nerves or blood vessels, and require removal to relieve symptoms of pain or discomfort.

Lipomas do not disappear by themselves and frequently get bigger. Therefore, surgery is the only way of getting rid of the lump altogether.

What are the potential risks and complications of this operation?

- **Bleeding** – Your wound may bleed a little after the procedure. If this occurs, place a clean cotton handkerchief or cloth over the area and apply constant pressure for approximately 10–15 minutes.
- **Bruising or haematoma** – Bleeding under the skin can cause an area of bruising, which will disperse in a few days. In some cases, blood can collect under the skin and form a clot.

- Causing interference to daily living i.e lipoma on neck making it tricky if impossible to wear a shift collar.

This is known as a haematoma and may require medical treatment. If your wound area becomes bruised and swollen and you are concerned please contact the Surgical Short Stay Unit or your GP for advice.

- **Infection** – Your wound may become infected. If your wound becomes swollen, very red, very tender or starts producing a cloudy discharge, see your GP who may prescribe you antibiotics.

What happens in the operation?

An incision is made in the skin directly above the lump. The lipoma is then removed from the surrounding tissue. The skin is then closed with stitches.

The extent of the surgery depends on the size of the lipoma and whether it has formed under muscle as well as skin.

What happens after my operation?

How do I care for my wound and stitches?

Keep your wound covered, clean and dry for 5–10 days. You may then remove the dressing and shower/bath as usual.

The stitches are usually dissolvable, but if they require removal the nursing staff will inform you when and where to have them removed.

Will it hurt?

Some discomfort is expected following any type of surgery.

You are advised to take a mild painkiller before the local anaesthetic wears off, as the operation site will be tender for a few days.

You may be prescribed painkillers to take home. Please be aware all medications dispensed from the Day Surgery Unit carry a prescription charge, unless you are exempt.

General Advice

- **Driving** – You must not drive for 24 hours if you have had a general anaesthetic. There are no driving restrictions if you have had a local anaesthetic.
- **Work** – You are strongly advised to take at least 2-3 days off work following your surgery, especially if you have had a general anaesthetic. You may return to work once you can perform your job comfortably and safely. This may take 2–3 weeks for larger lipomas.
- **Activities** – You may return to normal activities as comfort allows. However, avoid strenuous activities such as sport or heavy gardening until you are completely healed (2–3 weeks).

Will I need a follow up appointment?

If a follow up appointment is required to see the surgeons in clinic, this will be sent in the post.