

Lipoma Removal

AMBULATORY CARE:

What you need to know about a lipoma removal: A lipoma removal is surgery to remove a lipoma. A lipoma is a benign (non cancer) tumor made up of fat tissue.

How to prepare for a lipoma removal: Your healthcare provider will talk to you about how to prepare for surgery. He or she may tell you not to eat or drink anything 6 hours before your surgery. He or she will tell you what medicines to take or not take on the day of your surgery. You may need to stop taking blood thinner medicines or NSAIDs several days before surgery. Arrange for someone to drive you home from surgery.

What will happen during a lipoma removal: You will be given local anesthesia to numb the surgery area. With local anesthesia, you may still feel pressure or pushing, but you should not feel any pain. If your lipoma is large or deep, you may be given general anesthesia. General anesthesia will keep you asleep and free from pain during surgery. Your healthcare provider will make an incision in your skin and remove the lipoma. The removed lipoma may be sent to a lab and tested for cancer. Your provider may use stitches or medical glue to close your skin. A pressure bandage will be placed over your incision to prevent bleeding.

What will happen after a lipoma removal: You will be able to go home after your surgery. You may have pain, swelling, or bruising where the lipoma was removed. These symptoms should get better in a few days.

Risks of a lipoma removal: You may bleed more than expected or get an infection. A pocket of fluid or blood may form under your skin. This may heal on its own or you may need treatment to remove it. Lipoma removal may cause a permanent scar.

Seek care immediately if:

- Blood soaks through your bandage.
- Your stitches come apart.

Contact your healthcare provider if:

- You have a fever or chills.
- Your wound is red, swollen, or draining pus.
- You have nausea or are vomiting.
- Your skin is itchy, swollen, or you have a rash.
- You have questions or concerns about your condition or care.

Medicines: You **may** need any of the following:

- **Prescription pain medicine** may be given. Ask your healthcare provider how to take this medicine safely. Some prescription pain medicines contain acetaminophen. Do not take other medicines that contain acetaminophen without talking to your healthcare provider. Too much acetaminophen may cause liver damage. Prescription pain medicine may cause constipation. Ask your healthcare provider how to prevent or treat constipation.
- **NSAIDs**, such as ibuprofen, help decrease swelling, pain, and fever. NSAIDs can cause stomach bleeding or kidney problems in certain people. If you take blood thinner medicine, **always** ask your healthcare provider if NSAIDs are safe for you. Always read the medicine label and follow directions.
- **Take your medicine as directed.** Contact your healthcare provider if you think your medicine is not helping or if you have side effects. Tell him or her if you are allergic to any medicine. Keep a list of the medicines, vitamins, and herbs you take. Include the amounts, and when and why you take them. Bring the list or the pill bottles to follow-up visits. Carry your medicine list with you in case of an emergency.

Care for your incision as directed: Ask your healthcare provider when your incision can get wet. Do not take baths or get in hot tubs for 4 weeks or as directed. These actions can cause an infection. Carefully wash around the incision with soap and water. It is okay to let soap and water run over your incision. Dry the area and put on new, clean bandages as directed. Change your bandages when they get wet or dirty. Check your incision every day for signs of infection, such as redness, swelling, or pus.

Self-care:

- **Apply firm, steady pressure if bleeding occurs.** A small amount of bleeding from your incision is possible. Apply pressure with a clean gauze or towel for 5 to 10 minutes. Seek care immediately if you blood soaks through your bandage or becomes heavy.
- **Rest** as directed. Vigorous activity such as exercise can cause your stitches to come apart. Ask your healthcare provider when you can return to your normal activities.
- **Apply ice** on your incision for 15 to 20 minutes every hour or as directed. Use an ice pack, or put crushed ice in a plastic bag. Cover it with a towel before you apply it to your skin. Ice helps prevent tissue damage and decreases swelling and pain.
- **Do not drive for 24 hours if you received general anesthesia.** General anesthesia can make you feel drowsy and unable to focus. This makes it unsafe to drive.

Follow up with your healthcare provider as directed: You will need to return to have your stitches removed. Write down your questions so you remember to ask them during your visits.