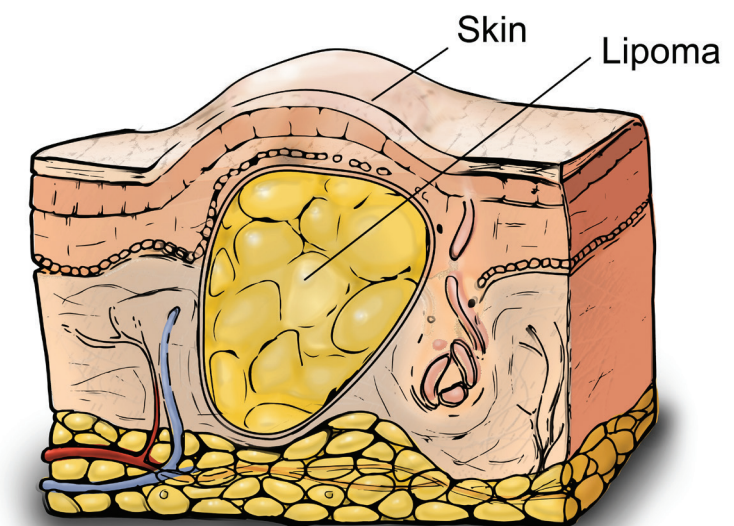


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What is a lipoma?

A lipoma is a common growth of fatty tissue. It usually grows just under the skin but can also grow into the muscle or deeper tissues. It is made of fat and usually doesn't hurt. Lipomas can show up anywhere on the body, but are most common on the back, chest, upper stomach area, arms, shoulders and neck.



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Lipomas are soft tissue tumors that rarely turn into cancer. Lipomas don't usually need to be treated, but if they are uncomfortable or have high-risk features, you may benefit from removal. Many patients have a lipoma removed simply because they do not like the way it looks.

A mass may be a lipoma if it:

- is round or oval
- is not painful to touch
- is just under the surface of the skin and can be moved around slightly
- stays in one place over time and doesn't spread to the tissues around it

In most cases, once a lipoma is removed surgically, it does not come back in the same location. However, there is a chance that new lipomas may develop in different areas of the body over time.



During Surgery

- Depending on the size and location of the lipoma, the removal procedure may be done in the clinic with local anesthesia only. You will be awake but the skin around the lipoma will be numb so you will feel pressure but not pain.
- If the lipoma is larger, deeper, or in a more complicated location, you may need general anesthesia so that you are asleep. If so, the procedure will be performed in the hospital.
- The surgeon will make an incision (cut) on top of the lipoma, then carefully remove it all.
- If you have more than one lipoma, they can most likely all be taken out at the same time.
- After the lipoma is taken out, the skin is closed with stitches that go under your skin and will dissolve in about a month.
- The wound is covered with paper strips or surgical glue. Some surgeons may also use a gauze dressing on top of the wound.

After Surgery

Recovery – What to Expect

If your lipoma is removed in the clinic, you will be able to go home immediately following the procedure. If your lipoma is removed in the hospital, you will be released to go home after you wake up in the recovery room.

Pain

- Expect to have pain at the incision site for a few days all the way up to a few weeks. The pain should get progressively better and not worse.
- Take pain medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin) as needed. Follow the dosing instructions indicated on the label of these medications.

Incision Site

- It is okay to shower and get the incision wet 24 hours after your surgery. However, do not soak the incision, such as in hot tubs, swimming pools or bathtubs, for two weeks.
- If you have plastic dressings with gauze on the incisions, you may shower over them. The plastic dressing should be removed the second day after surgery.
- If you have small paper strips, you may shower over them, and they will fall off on their own eventually. It is normal for the strips to be stained with blood.
- If you have surgical glue, it will flake off on its own.

Activity

- Most patients can return to their usual activity and work the day after surgery.
- Avoid activities that stretch the incision until it is healed.
- If you need FMLA paperwork completed or a letter to return to work, please contact your surgeon's office to discuss as soon as possible. Please allow one week to get these documents completed.

Follow-Up

Your surgery team will discuss your follow-up plan with you. An in-person follow-up may not be necessary if you are doing well after surgery.

Call your doctor right away if you have any of the following symptoms:



- Fever of 100.4°F or higher
- Drainage or bleeding from the incision (more than a few drops)
- Signs of infection around the incision (redness, drainage, warmth, pain)
- Incision that opens up or pulls apart
- Persistent nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea



For non-urgent concerns, MyChart is a great way to get in touch with your surgery team by sending secure messages. You may also attach photos if you have concerns about your incision site. If you do not have Baylor MyChart, call the office and the staff will assist you in setting it up.

If you have an urgent surgical concern after hours, please call the office number. The answering service will connect you with the on-call surgeon.