



Removal of breast lump Information leaflet

(including wide local excision ,excision biopsy and ductal surgery.)

What is a breast lump?

Breast lumps are common and have a number of different causes. Most lumps are non-cancerous, however it is best to be seen by your doctor as soon as possible. Breast lumps vary in shape and texture and are usually caused by hormonal changes in your body.

What happens before the operation?

- Your doctor will see you and explain what the surgery will involve and decide if you are suitable for a local or general anaesthetic.
- The operation is usually carried out as a day case.
- You will be invited to attend a pre operative assessment, at this appointment you will be given information about the day of surgery and what to expect, you will be given the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

What happens after the operation?

After returning from theatre you may have a dressing over the wound that has been applied in theatre. Usually, you can go home a few hours after the operation. The nurse will check you are comfortable and give you something to eat and drink.

Is there anything that can go wrong?

All operations and anaesthetics do have a risk, but this is a relatively safe operation. If your wound becomes infected you will need to take antibiotics.

Will I feel pain?

You may feel discomfort, so you will be given painkillers before, during and after the operation. You will be given painkillers to take home. Please read the instructions on the bottle and take them regularly for the first few days.

You last had Paracetamol at and can take it again if needed after 4-6 hours.

You last had Ibuprofen at and can take again if needed after 6-8 hours.

Going home

It is essential that you are accompanied home by a responsible adult. Although you may feel normal, you will be drowsy and dis-orientated for up to 48 hours after your anaesthetic.

How do I look after my wound?

You can shower as usual but you should not soak the wound until it is completely healed. Do not use scented soaps, talc or spray deodorant until your wound is fully healed (approximately 3 weeks after surgery). Do not allow the force of the shower directly onto your wound.

How long do I need to keep my wound dressing in place for?

You should remove the wound dressing 48 hours after surgery or as instructed before going home.

Do I need to have the stitches (sutures) removed?

The stitches in the wound are dissolvable, so will not need to be removed. You will have 'steri strips' covering the wound. These can be safely removed 5-7 days after the operation.

Things to be aware of after surgery

Pain- It is normal for your wound area to be tender/sore. However, if the pain is not made better by your painkillers, you should contact your GP or the ward.

Your wound area- It is normal for your wound site to be bruised, swollen, and to be able to feel 'lumps and bumps' around the incision (this is part of the healing process). You may also experience numbness or changes in the sensation where the scar is. This is because nerve endings are affected during surgery- this is normal. If your wound is red, swollen, inflamed or 'weeping', you should contact your GP or the ward.

Your whole self- It is normal to feel quite tired and lethargic after surgery.

How will I know if I have developed a seroma?

A seroma is a common occurrence and is a collection of serum (a straw coloured fluid produced by all wounds) under the skin of the wound. If you notice a large, soft swelling under the scar you should contact the breast specialist nurses who will discuss with you whether you should have this fluid drained. If this is the case, it will usually mean that you will need to attend a clinic appointment.

When can I return to school?

If you have had a local anaesthetic you may return to school the next day. But if you have had a general anaesthetic then you should be supervised at home for 24 hours.

Can I wear a normal bra?

Underwire bras are not recommended, otherwise yes. You might find sleeping in a 'crop top' or camisole more comfortable. You may start wearing a sports bra 1-2 weeks after surgery.

When can I do exercise?

If you do regular exercise such as 'keep fit', swimming or any other sport, you should be able to return to these when your wound is fully healed and you have had your follow up appointment. This will be 2 -3 weeks.

When do I need to see a doctor again?

An appointment will be sent in the post if you are not given it before you go home.

Phone for advice if:

- There is any fresh bleeding through the dressing
- You are feeling generally unwell, or have a lot of discomfort
- You are worried about your wound

Children's Day Unit

Tel: 0161 291 2620

Breast Adult Ward

Tel: 0161 291 5060/2943/2944

Breast Specialist Nurse:

Tel:
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