

Patient Information for Seroma Management

What is a Seroma?

A seroma is a build-up of straw coloured bodily fluids in a place on your body where tissue has been removed by surgery.

Seromas can happen after the following surgeries:

- Complete Lymph Node Removal
 - Axilla (Armpit)
 - Neck
 - Groin
- Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy (A procedure to see if cancer has spread into the body's lymphatic system)
- Large Lipoma (fatty lump) Removal

Seromas can appear about a week after surgery or after drainage tubes have been removed. The site of the surgery may have an area that becomes swollen and feels like there is liquid under the skin.

Managing a Seroma:

Seromas can be reabsorbed back into your body over a period of a few months however if the area becomes very swollen, painful or the seroma doesn't improve your doctor or specially trained nurse can use a needle and syringe to drain the seroma. In some cases the seroma may have to be drained more than once. Occasionally this may need to be repeated over several weeks/ months.

Rarely it may not fully resolve and surgical options can be discussed, however you can live with a small seroma without harm.

Tell your doctor/specialist nurse if:

- The amount of fluid seems to be increasing or the seroma is putting pressure on the healing area
- You notice signs of infection, such as redness, warmth, or tenderness
- You develop flu like symptoms
- The swelling increases beyond the site of the surgery - this could be a sign of lymphedema (a condition where the lymphatic system in the body stops functioning properly and results in swelling, most often of a limb)

Useful contacts:

Should you experience any problems listed in this leaflet please contact us on one of the numbers below:

Plastics Dressing Clinic, 8am-5pm Mon-Fri: 01603 288165

Clinical Skin Cancer Nurse Specialists, 9 am- 4pm Mon- Fri: 01603 288365

Out of hours/ weekends/ bank holidays: 01603 286286, ask for Plastic on-call duty doctor

Emergency: Call NHS 111

