

FIBROADENOMA



What is a Fibroadenoma?

The breasts are made up of ducts (tubes that carry milk to the nipple) and lobules (milk-producing glands), which are surrounded by fatty tissue and supportive tissue. **Sometimes tissue will grow over a lobule like a ball, forming a solid lump. This is a Fibroadenoma.** It is one of the commonest benign (non cancerous lumps) in the breast.

A Fibroadenoma usually has a rubbery texture, is smooth to the touch and moves easily under the skin. For this reason it is sometimes called a 'breast mouse'. Fibroadenomas are usually painless. Fibroadenomas are very common and it is not unusual to have more than one.

What causes a Fibroadenoma?

It is thought that they occur because of increased sensitivity to the female hormone oestrogen.

What age does it commonly occur?

They often develop during puberty and so are mostly found in young women, although they can occur in women of any age.

Diagnosis

Fibroadenoma usually become noticeable as a lump in the breast.

A Specialist Consultation is essential and it is important to undergo three different tests, often referred to as **Triple assessment**

- Clinical breast examination,
- Mammogram (breast x-ray)
- Ultrasound scan & a needle core biopsy of the lump under the guidance of an ultrasound.

Management

If the Triple assessment including a Core biopsy as mentioned above has confirmed the presence of a Fibroadenoma, the lady can be reassured that the lump is NOT cancer and that it will not lead to cancer.

If the size of the Fibroadenoma is small less than 2cms, it can be left alone and followed up with an Ultrasound scan in two to three months to make sure it has not got bigger. If the size has not changed, the patient can be discharged from follow up. Some women do not like to keep the lump, in which case the lump can be excised.

If the lump gets bigger, painful, or the lump is over 3 cms or if it is proven to be complex fibroadenoma on core needle biopsy, surgery is advisable to remove the Fibroadenoma.

The operation is done under a general anaesthetic, and the patient would need to be in hospital for the day or overnight.

With advances in surgical techniques (Oncoplastic breast surgery), this operation can be done by placing an incision at the edge of the areola (circumareolar incision) to give a good cosmetic result with a scar that is least visible and would fade in time. There should not be any defect in the breast after the surgery ensuring a good aesthetic outcome.