

# What are lipomata?

**Lipomata are slow-growing, non-cancerous, fatty tissue (tumours) underneath the skin. Lipomatas may be seen in all age groups, but usually first appear between 40 and 60 years of age. They are common around the tummy, back and shoulder area, but are not found on the hands or feet.**

Often lipomata are removed for purely cosmetic reasons (not routinely funded by the patient's local NHS commissioning organisation), although sometimes patients with multiple lipomata may need a medical procedure that involves taking a small sample of body tissue so it can be examined under a microscope (biopsy) to exclude genetic conditions that cause tumours to grow along the nerves (neurofibromatosis).

## Patient eligibility criteria:

Removal or treatment of lipomata are not routinely funded by the patient's local NHS commissioning organisation. This is because all removal of lipomata that does not meet the patient eligibility criteria is considered to be a cosmetic procedure.

The patient's local NHS commissioning organisations will only fund this treatment if the lipomatas are on the face and neck and patient meets the following criteria:

- suspected or proven cancerous (malignancy) **OR**
- significant functional impairment caused by the lipomata **OR**
- to provide evidence in conditions where there are multiple under the skin (subcutaneous) lesions.

Lipomatas on any other areas of the body should be discussed with GP for care to be agreed locally.

The clinician in charge of the care of the patient's specific condition, usually a hospital doctor, can assist the application, if there is exceptional clinical need for the treatment to be funded. The patient's clinician must evidence clinical exceptionality and must be supported by the patient's local NHS commissioning organisation. See separate leaflet for more information on Individual Funding Requests (IFRs).

## Advice and further guidance:



Lipomata can be left alone as the size usually stabilises after initial growth. If it is necessary to remove the lipomata, they can usually be removed with a simple procedure because lipomatas generally do not infiltrate into surrounding tissue. Small lipomatas can be removed, with **local anaesthetic** used to numb the area. The doctor will cut the skin over the lump and remove the lipomata, before closing the wound with stitches. After the wound has healed, the patient will be left with a thin scar.

For more information search for 'lipomata' at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**Treatment policy for patients covered by NHS Solihull, Birmingham CrossCity and Birmingham South Central Clinical Commissioning Groups.**