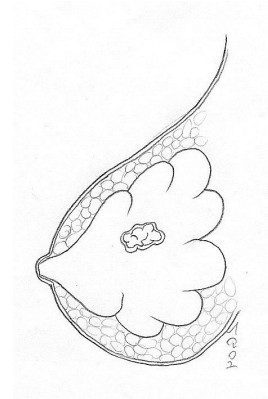


FIBROADENOMA

What is a fibroadenoma?

- A fibroadenoma is a benign (not cancerous) breast lump that occurs mainly in women under 35.
- This is the most common lump found in teenagers and in women in their early 20's.
- Unlike cysts, which are fluid-filled, fibroadenomas are solid lumps made up of fibrous tissue and gland cells that have multiplied faster than normal.



Common features of a fibroadenoma:

- It is usually a painless, firm lump that may increase in size over time, but it does not tend to change with the menstrual cycle. Some women find the lump becomes tender before their period.
- Fibroadenomas are often found alone, but about 15% of women have them in groups or in both breasts. The cause of fibroadenomas is not known.
- Having a fibroadenoma in the breast does not increase your risk of developing breast cancer.

Diagnosis of a Fibroadenoma:

Examination

- Your doctor or surgeon will take a thorough breast health history and then examine your breasts.
- Fibroadenomas usually feel like a slippery, smooth, hard marble that moves freely within the breast.
- It is not always possible to tell the difference between a fibroadenoma and a fluid-filled cyst.
- Your doctor may decide to do a fine needle aspiration to collapse the cyst or to remove cells from a solid lump that can then be looked at under a microscope.
- Mammography and /or ultrasound may be ordered.
- Radiologists recognize fibroadenomas on a mammogram as an oval-shaped, smooth surfaced, well-defined lump, whereas a cancer would appear as a more irregular shape, extending out into the surrounding tissues.

Fine Needle Aspiration

- The doctor inserts a needle attached to a small syringe into the lump to remove a small sample of cells.
- Lab results from the sample can help the doctor determine whether a minor operation to remove the lump is necessary.
- It may be safe to leave it at this time and follow-up with regular breast examinations by your physician.

Surgical Biopsy

- A minor surgical procedure done when a woman is under local or general anesthetic.
- Depending on the lump's location, the surgeon makes an incision over the lump or around the nipple to remove the fibroadenoma.
- The tissue that made up the lump is sent to the pathologist for diagnosis.

Treatment:

- Your age, past history, how long you have had the lump, mammogram or ultrasound findings, your anxiety level and any recent change in the size and shape of the lump are all considered when you and your doctor plan follow-up. Some lumps get bigger, while others stay the same, get smaller or disappear over time. Follow-up may include observation with return visits to your surgeon for a breast exam and repeat mammogram and/or ultrasound in 3-6 months time may be all that is needed.

This information is of a general nature and may vary according to your special circumstances. If you have specific questions, please contact your physician or appropriate health care professional.

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