

If you have any other concerns, please contact the Breast Care Nurses on telephone 01623 622515, extension 3884 (Monday to Friday between 9am to 5pm).

Out of hours or if you require more urgent help/advice at any time please:

- Make an emergency appointment at your local GP surgery,
- Attend your local Emergency Department.
- Call NHS 111.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Seroma after breast cancer surgery

This leaflet is to give you information and advice about seromas following your breast surgery and/or drain removal.

The aim is to help you get back to full health as quickly as possible.

What is a seroma?

A seroma is a build-up of clear, yellow fluid under the skin after surgery. This fluid is called serous fluid. It is made by the body and helps keep tissues healthy.

You may have seen this fluid before. If you have ever had a blister, the liquid inside it is serous fluid.

Normally, this fluid moves through tiny tubes called lymph vessels. These tubes connect to lymph glands. During breast cancer surgery, some of these tubes or glands may be cut or removed. When this happens, the fluid cannot drain properly. Instead, it leaks into the space under the skin and collects there. This causes a soft, swollen area called a seroma.

A seroma can also form because surgery leaves an empty space where breast tissue or lymph glands used to be. The tissue around this space is healing and may leak fluid. The fluid then gathers under the wound or in the armpit.

Treatment for seroma

If a seroma gets large, it can feel uncomfortable. The skin may feel tight or tingly as it stretches. A doctor or nurse can easily remove the extra fluid with a simple procedure.

A seroma is not serious, and it is not dangerous. It will not cause harm, apart from some discomfort.

If a seroma is small and does not cause much discomfort, it does not always need to be drained. Most seromas slowly go away on their own. This can take a few weeks or sometimes a few months.

How is the seroma drained?

The doctor or nurse will clean your skin first. Then they will gently put a needle into the swollen area and use a syringe to remove the fluid. This usually does not hurt because the area may still feel numb after surgery.

Complications of seroma drainage

There are very few problems with this procedure. Using a needle to drain a seroma slightly breaks the skin. This means there is a small chance of infection or a little bleeding, but this is rare.

If you think you have a seroma

If you are worried about your wound or a seroma, please contact the Breast Clinic at Sherwood Forest Hospitals. You can call **01623 622515, extension 3884**.

If no one answers, please leave a message on the answering machine. Someone will contact you to arrange an appointment.

You may not be able to be seen on the same day, especially at weekends, however, your message will be checked by the team, and if it is safe to wait a few days before your appointment, you will be fine to do so.

If you call at the weekend, you may not get a call back until Monday. If you have a high temperature or feel very unwell, please get help from your nearest **PC24** or **Emergency Department**.

Important

Please contact us using the number on page 3, or call **NHS 111**, if you notice any signs of infection. These may include redness around the area, skin that feels very hot, strong pain, or feeling feverish or like you have the flu.

There is a risk of a deep vein thrombosis (usually called a DVT or blood clot) following surgery. If you notice swelling in any of your limbs following the operation, you will need to attend your nearest Emergency Department.