

# What is a Seroma

## What is a Seroma?

- A seroma is a collection of fluid which can build up under the wound or in the axilla (armpit) after a breast cancer operation.
- The fluid seeps from small blood and lymph vessels that are cut during the operation to remove the breast cancer tissue or lymph nodes.

Once these small vessels start to heal no further fluid collects and the seroma will gradually be absorbed by the body.

- Approximately one in three patients who have had a breast operation will develop a seroma, even if surgical drains have been used.

It may take several weeks after an operation for the seroma to disappear completely.

## What do I do if I think I have a seroma?

- Small seromas will usually disappear within one month without any treatment. If the seroma is large and causing problems with discomfort or restricting your arm movement then the fluid can be drained using a fine needle.
- This may need to be repeated until it has settled down, and can vary from person to person. Having a seroma drained is usually painless as the area around the wound is still likely to be numb.
- Seromas do not always need to be drained. If they do need to be drained then this **does not** need to be done as an emergency.
- Repeated seroma drainage can encourage the seroma to refill and as the procedure carries a small risk of infection it should not be done unless the seroma is causing problems.

If you think you have seroma that needs assessment please contact the Breast Clinic. Do not attend the Accident and Emergency Department.

**(Please note that the Seroma Chart is on the next page).**

Date	Breast	Axilla	LD	U/S	Amount	Triamcinolone	Signed
Date	Breast	Axilla	LD	U/S	Amount	Triamcinolone	Signed



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