Fibroadenoma

Benign solid lump of tissue in the breast

The cause of breast fibroadenomas is unknown. They are very common and it is not unusual to have more than one. Fibroadenomas may be dependent upon estrogen as they are common in pre-menopausal women, can be found in post-menopausal women taking estrogen, and because they grow larger in pregnant women.

Fibroadenomas normally have a rubbery texture, are firm and round, are smooth to the touch and move easily under the skin. They are usually not associated with pain or discomfort; however, some women may have these symptoms.

Fibroadenomas can be discovered during breast self-examination, routine check-up or on a mammogram. Once it is recognized, a breast ultrasound is normally performed. An ultrasound is a technique that uses sound waves showing whether a lump is fluid-filled or solid. Once determined solid, more testing is recommended to be certain the abnormality is a benign fibroadenoma and not something more serious. Test options include fine needle aspiration, core needle biopsy or excisional biopsy. Recommendations will be made depending on the location and size of the abnormality, anxiety of the patient, as well as your primary care physician’s referral.

- **Fine Needle Aspiration**- a minor procedure where fluid and/or cells are removed through small needle.
- **Core Biopsy**- procedure where a larger piece of tissue is removed from the lump through a larger needle.
- **Excisional Biopsy**- a surgical procedure where the entire lump is removed through an incision (cut in the skin).

In some cases, if the area is not removed, it may resolve on its own over many months or years. It may also stay the same size and remain in the breast for many years. If it is not removed, it may continue to grow, in which case it would again be recommended to have it taken out. After removal, no further treatment is usually necessary.

Fibroadenomas are not cancerous, nor do they increase your risk of breast cancer. It is important to be aware of any breast changes and report those to your primary care physician. Remember, monthly breast self-examination and yearly mammograms are our best defense against breast cancer.