

Useful phone numbers

Lincoln Breast Unit: 01522 537662
Boston Breast Unit: 01205 445998
Grantham Breast Unit: 01476 593945
Email: breastteam.grantham@ulh.nhs.uk

Breast Cancer Care
www.breastcancercare.org.uk
Freephone Helpline: 0808 800 6000

Breast Cancer Now
www.breastcancer.org

Reproduced with kind permission of Royal Cornwall Hospital

References

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet please email
patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is
accurate and impartial.



If you require this information in another language, large print,
audio (CD or tape) or braille please email the Patient Information
team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk

Excellence in rural healthcare



Lipomodelling

Breast Care Services

www.ulh.nhs.uk

What is lipomodelling?

Lipomodelling is a procedure used to improve the contour of a breast which has had previous surgery. The procedure has been developed from liposuction techniques. It involves taking fat from elsewhere in your body (usually from your abdomen) and injecting it into the breast where it is needed to improve the shape. The result can give an improved symmetry, with a soft natural appearance and feel.

What does it involve?

Fat is taken from your own body, often your lower abdomen, thighs or hips. This is done through small cuts into your skin. The removed fat is then concentrated and injected with great care in tiny amounts into the area to be treated. This procedure is usually done under general anaesthetic in one or more sessions depending on the amount of fat graft needed. It is done as a day procedure or with an overnight stay.

This procedure is normally performed 2 to 3 years after the initial treatment for cancer, but this may vary in certain situations. Usually patients should have had a normal mammogram prior to this procedure.

Who may benefit from this procedure?

- Patients who have had breast conserving surgery for breast cancer and who have asymmetry in the breast.
- Following mastectomy, when there has been subsequent reconstruction, either with patients own muscle/fat or with implants, to improve symmetry and contour.
- Patient in whom radiotherapy has damaged the skin, in an effort to improve the quality of skin, sometimes in preparation for reconstructive surgery.

Photographs

You will be asked to sign a consent form to allow your surgeon/nurse to photograph your breasts before and after the procedure.

These images will be made available to other patients who are considering similar procedures. Your identity will be protected as they will not show your face.

They may also be used for teaching purposes both locally and nationally.

You are free to withdraw your consent to this at any time and this will not affect the care you receive.

Very rare complications

- 'Guttering' or unevenness of the skin in the donor site due to fat harvest very close to the skin.
- Pneumothorax or air leak outside the lungs.
- Peritonitis due to bowel perforation while harvesting fat from the abdomen.
- Fat embolism where fat gets injected into blood vessels.

There is theoretical concern about any possible recurrence of breast cancer after lipomodelling in the long term, although there is no evidence in the published reports.

What happens afterwards?

You should rest for 24 hours and then increase your activity. Normal non-strenuous activity may be resumed in 2 to 3 days.

- You have stitches to close the incisions which need to be removed in 7 to 10 days.
- You have dissolvable stitches that will 'melt' away within 90 days.

It is advisable to wear support underwear over the donor area for 6 weeks - day and night - to control the swelling and bruising. It will also help with the contouring of the donor area. Please bring this with you to the hospital.

Ensure your bra does not put pressure on the lipomodelled area. It is preferable not to have mammograms for 6 months after this procedure.

Pain can be controlled with usual painkillers - paracetamol (do not exceed the recommended dose).

When can I resume driving?

Following lipomodelling, you can start driving when your wounds have healed, you are pain free, can wear your seat belt comfortably and can do an emergency stop safely. You are advised to contact your insurance company prior to this.

Control underwear

It is recommended that you wear the following type of control wear. They can be purchased at high street retailers and on-line.

Abdominal control



Thigh control



Abdominal and thigh control



We do not endorse any one supplier.