

# Dermatofibrosarcoma Protuberans (DFSP)

Information for patients



## What is dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans (DFSP)?

Dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans is a rare malignant (cancerous) tumour which can develop in the deep layers of the skin. It is classed as a soft tissue sarcoma.

Dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans can be locally aggressive, which means it can affect the surrounding tissues nearby. There is no definite known cause for this type of tumour.

Dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans can affect any age group but is most common between the ages of 20 to 50. It affects slightly more women than men.

## Diagnosis

We will confirm your diagnosis once we have carried out ultrasound and MRI scans (imaging) and we have the histology (results) from the biopsy taken from the tumour, if this is needed. The dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans will also be 'graded', depending on how fast it is growing and how likely it is to spread to other parts of the body.

As with all cancers, dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans can spread (metastasise) to other parts of the body. We will check for this very quickly after your diagnosis by taking CT or PET CT scans. Dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans can spread to the lungs so we will closely monitor your chest with X-rays at each clinic appointment during your follow-up. We may also take further CT scans if we feel these are needed.

## Treatment options

The usual treatment for dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans is surgery to remove the tumour. Sometimes these tumours can have 'tentacles' which invade the areas surrounding the tumour, which means we may need to also remove a large area around the tumour. We will decide on the best treatment for you, depending on a number of factors. These include:

- the position, size and grade of the tumour
- whether it has spread to other parts of your body
- your general health and wellbeing.

## Follow-up

Once the tumour has been removed, you will remain under the care of the sarcoma team for your follow-up. This will include clinic appointments at the following times:

- every 3 months from your surgery, until 2 years after your surgery
- every 6 months between years 2-5 after your surgery
- once a year between years 5-10 after your surgery.

## Useful information

### **Macmillan: Types of soft tissue sarcoma**

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Cancertypes/Softtissuesarcomas/Aboutsofttissuesarcomas/Typesofsofttissuesarcoma.aspx>

### **Sarcoma UK: What is sarcoma?**

<http://sarcoma.org.uk/what-is-sarcoma>

### **Cancer Research UK: Types of soft tissue sarcoma**

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/type/sarcoma/about/types-of-soft-tissue-sarcomas#lipo>

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Author: Helen Stradling, Advanced Nurse Practitioner  
August 2015  
Review: August 2018  
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust  
Oxford OX3 9DU  
[www.ouh.nhs.uk/information](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/information)

