

Department of Dermatology

Dermatofibroma

Information for patients



You have been given a diagnosis of dermatofibroma. This leaflet has been written to give you further information about your diagnosis.

What is a dermatofibroma?

A dermatofibroma is the name we give to a common and harmless knot of fibrous tissue which occurs in the skin.

Dermatofibromas are firm bumps which feel like small rubbery buttons lying just under the surface of the skin. They are usually less than 1cm in diameter and range from pink to brown in colour, often in a ring around the fibrous knot of tissue.

Most commonly they occur on the lower legs of young or middle-aged adults and they are more common in women than in men.

What causes a dermatofibroma?

It is not clear what causes dermatofibromas but they often seem to develop after a minor injury to the skin, such as a prick from a thorn or an insect bite. Occasionally they itch or hurt when touched or knocked. If they are on the legs, shaving the skin over them can cause bleeding.

How is it diagnosed?

Dermatofibromas are diagnosed by their appearance to the naked eye. The diagnosis may also be confirmed by removing and examining it under a microscope.

Treatment options

Dermatofibromas do not go away by themselves. However, as they are harmless and do not turn into cancer, no treatment is usually needed. They can be removed under local anaesthetic if there is doubt about their diagnosis. However, removal will always cause a scar.

Follow-up

Routine follow-up after a diagnosis of dermatofibroma is not usually necessary. It is always advisable to be safe in the sun and your nurse or doctor can advise you further about sun safety. Please remember that if you develop a new lump in your skin, particularly if it is pigmented (coloured), you should ask your doctor to take a look at it.

Further information

British Association of Dermatologists

Tel: 0207 383 0266

Website: www.bad.org.uk

Who to contact

If you have any questions about your diagnosis or management, please speak to your GP.

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter,
a document in Easy Read, another language, large print,
Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473**
or email **PALS@ouh.nhs.uk**

Authors: Dr Richard Turner and Dr Emily Ryder
Oxford Department of Dermatology
January 2017
Review: January 2020
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Oxford OX3 9DU
www.ouh.nhs.uk/information

