

LUMPS & BUMPS



Please visit the following article from Petful about lumps on pets:
[Suspicious Lump on Your Dog? Here's When to Tell the Vet](#)

Questions you will be asked about the growth will include:

1. **Location**
2. **Size**
3. **Appearance:** above/below skin; [non]haired; color (pink; black); ulcerated/oozing?
4. **Consistency:** firm/soft; smooth/irregular; adhered to deep tissue/freely movable?
5. When was the mass first noticed? How long has mass been present?
6. Has mass grown/changed in size or shape?
7. Has a veterinarian evaluated the mass before? If so, when? Was an aspirate/cytology or biopsy performed?

Additional diagnostics such as labwork, [chest] radiographs, or an ultrasound may be recommended before surgery is performed if the growth is suspected to be cancerous. Additional charges apply.

Options for addressing any mass include:

1. Monitoring for changes and alerting your veterinarian if changes occur.
2. Collecting cells with a needle for examination under the microscope (fine needle aspiration-FNA & cytology).
3. Surgical **biopsy or removal** of the mass. FNA/cytology is almost always recommended as the first step before a surgical procedure is scheduled.

Any mass surgically removed, should be sent into the lab for histopathology (microscopic diagnosis and margin assessment).

Please look for any changes of the mass/growth such as: increase or fluctuation in size (especially rapid growth), shape (irregularity), color, ulceration, texture (i.e. it becomes firmer or softer) and/or adherence (attachment) to surrounding or deeper tissues. If any of these occur, please reach out or schedule a reassessment.

A note about **Lipomas (Fatty Masses)**

Lipomas are benign (non-cancerous) fatty masses. Lipomas are easily diagnosed with a FNA & cytology. Lipomas may grow slowly with time. If the lipoma is located on a leg or interfering with motion, they can be challenging to remove at larger sizes. Because lipomas are benign slow growing masses, **most of the time** removal is considered a **cosmetic procedure** as lipomas often do not cause problems for the pet.

Remember any surgical procedure (including removal of cosmetic masses) does carry some inherent risk and potential for post-operative complications including swelling, redness, inflammation, bruising, bleeding, seroma formation, dehiscence, or regrowth of mass if clean margins were not obtained.

For more information about lipomas, please visit [Lipomas in Dogs and Cats](#) written by Veterinary Partner.

A note about **Cysts** (aka: Epidermoid, Follicular, Sebaceous)

Cysts are benign (non-cancerous) masses usually located on top of or just underneath the skin in the subdermis. Cysts can be filled with either a clear/cloudy fluid or keratin (a thick, usually brown or yellowish cheesy material). Cysts are easily diagnosed with a FNA (Fine Needle Aspiration) & cytology. If blood is mostly obtained on FNA - this is most likely **NOT** a cyst and something more sinister may be present.

Cysts can grow, shrink or even rupture. Cysts can also become inflamed or infected.

Because cysts are benign masses, **most of the time** removal is considered a **cosmetic procedure** as cysts often do not cause problems for the pet.

For more information about cysts, please visit:

[Follicular Cysts in Dogs](#) written by Veterinary Partner

[Cysts](#) written by VCA Know Your Pet Client Education Series