

## **Lipomas (Fatty Tumors)**

Fat cells, like any other body cell, can multiply abnormally resulting in tumor formation. Lipomas are tumors made up of fat cells that are benign (not cancerous). They are usually smooth, soft, non-painful lumps under the skin. They can occur anywhere on your pet's body. They are most common in middle aged and older dogs, but can also occur in cats or younger animals. Pets that develop a lipoma will often develop others in various locations. It is important to have every new tumor you notice on your pet examined by a veterinarian. In most cases lipomas will grow for a short time, then stop growing and remain static for many years or forever. In a few cases they will continue to grow and become very large. These lipomas should be removed if they cause your pet any discomfort. In rare cases, they can be malignant (liposarcoma).

Lipomas are diagnosed with a simple test called a "fine needle aspirate." In most cases, the recommended treatment is to monitor the size of the tumor and watch for any symptoms of discomfort. In the majority of cases, these tumors can be left alone. If necessary, the tumor can be surgically removed. Reasons to surgically remove a lipoma would include:

- The tumor continues to grow to a size that causes discomfort or pain to your pet.
- The tumor's location makes it a problem, such as near a joint or on the face.