

Sarcoma, Soft Tissue - Symptoms and Signs [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board \[2\]](#), 05/2016

ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about body changes and other things that can signal a problem that may need medical care. To see other pages, use the menu.

People with sarcoma may experience the following symptoms or signs. Sometimes, people with sarcoma do not have any of these changes. Or, the cause of a symptom may be another medical condition that is not cancer.

STS rarely causes symptoms in the early stages. The first sign of a sarcoma in an arm, leg, or torso may be a painless lump or swelling. Most lumps are not sarcoma. The most common soft-tissue lumps are lipomas. Lipomas are made of fat cells and are not cancer. Lipomas have often been there for many years and rarely change in size.

However, it's important to talk with your doctor about any lumps that are larger than 2 inches (5 cm), grow larger, or are painful, regardless of their location. People with sarcoma that starts in the abdomen may not have any symptoms, or they may have pain or a sense of fullness.

Because STS can develop in flexible, elastic tissues or deep spaces in the body, the tumor can often push normal tissue out of its way as it grows. Therefore, a sarcoma may grow quite large before it causes symptoms. Eventually, it may cause pain as the growing tumor begins to press against nerves and muscles.

If you are concerned about any changes you experience, please talk with your doctor. Your doctor will ask how long and how often you've been experiencing the symptom(s), in addition to other questions. This is to help find out the cause of the problem, called a [diagnosis \[3\]](#).

If sarcoma is diagnosed, relieving symptoms remains an important part of cancer care and

treatment. This may also be called symptom management, palliative care, or supportive care. Be sure to talk with your health care team about symptoms you experience, including any new symptoms or a change in symptoms.

The [next section in this guide is Diagnosis](#) [3]. It explains what tests may be needed to learn more about the cause of the symptoms. Or, use the menu to choose another section to continue reading this guide.

Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/sarcoma-soft-tissue/symptoms-and-signs>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/19609>