



Patient information for Mohs Micrographic Surgery

What is Mohs Surgery?

For more information and a visual explanation please visit: www.mohs.org

Mohs Surgery is a surgical technique which removes skin cancer in its entirety while preserving the surrounding normal tissue. Your surgeon will start by surgically removing the visible portion of the tumor. While you wait, the tissue is taken to the lab, processed by a technician, and evaluated by the Mohs surgeon under the microscope; this process takes only 45-90 minute for each layer of tissue that is taken. 100% of the edges are visualized- which is why it is the most effective treatment for skin cancers! If Dr. Wald sees any of the tumor left, she will sparingly remove additional tissue where the cancer remains while leaving the normal tissue alone. This will continue until the cancer is completely removed.

Once the tumor is removed, she will repair the area damaged by the cancer. This can be done by closing the skin directly in a straight line, rearranging the skin around it (a flap), or with skin taken from another area (a graft); almost all techniques involve sutures. Alternatively, small/shallow wounds or those on the leg are frequently allowed to heal on their own (second intention). Occasionally your reconstruction may be performed by another surgeon who is also trained in reconstruction. All surgical removals of cancer will result in a scar, the goal is to make it as aesthetically pleasing as possible.

What to keep in mind when scheduling Mohs Surgery?

- **Plan to be at the office 6-8 hours.** Most surgeries do not take this long; however, each tumor is different and more complex cases take additional time. *We recommend you do not schedule other meetings or appointments the same day as your surgery.*
- **If you have an artificial joint placed within the last 2 years or an artificial heart valve that requires premedication prior to dentist visits, please let us know ASAP so we may send an antibiotic to your pharmacy**
- Choose a day where you will be able to stay **intown for at least 2 weeks** after the procedure (this is important for suture removal, wound checks, and to address any complications such as infection or bleeding).
- Select a day where you will be able to **refrain from ANY physical activity for AT LEAST 2 weeks** (including but not limited to golf, yoga/bending, weightlifting, power-walking hiking, etc.) or exposure to standing water (baths, pools, lakes, etc.)
- You will most likely have swelling and/or bruising around the surgical site (possibly even a black eye) which may impact your desire to attend social functions or participate in zoom calls. Also, you will need to keep the surgical site free of make-up and covered with a bandage for at least 7-14 days... so please, plan accordingly
- *If your surgery is around/near your eye*, please arrange for somebody to drive you to/from the procedure and bandages/swelling may impair your ability to drive safely



How to prepare for Mohs Surgery?

Following these instructions will directly impact your surgical procedure, the risk for post-operative complications, as well as your healing/scarring. If you have any questions please call.

As soon as possible:

- **STOP SMOKING**- THIS WILL NEGATIVELY IMPACT ALL ASPECTS OF HEALING/SCARING.
 - o Suggested resource: Allen Carr's Easy Way to Stop Smoking

Two weeks (14 days) prior to surgery:

- Avoid taking any NSAIDS (Bayer/aspirin, Motrin/ibuprofen, Aleve/naproxen, Excedrin, Midol), unless prescribed by your primary care doctor or cardiologist. Tylenol is okay take.
- Stop all herbal/homeopathic supplements (especially Vit E, garlic, ginger, ginko, ginseng, kava, etc.)
- **DO NOT STOP** any of your prescribed medications such as Coumadin/warfarin Plavix, Aggrenox, Eliquis, Xarelto.
- Prepare supplies you will likely need at home after the surgery:
 - Antibacterial soap (dial or hibiclens/chlorhexidine), Q-tips, Vaseline/Aquaphor, non-stick dressing/gauze, paper tape, ice-packs, Tylenol/acetaminophen

Two (2) days prior to surgery:

- Avoid alcohol- it thins the blood and increases bleeding/bruising which increase pain.

The day of surgery: *Again, plan to spend the entire day with us.*

Prior to arriving:

- Bathe the morning of surgery (you will need to keep the surgical site dry for 24-48 hours after)
- Eat a good breakfast or lunch prior- **YOU DO NOT NEED TO FAST PRIOR TO SURGERY**
- Take all your prescribed medications
- If your surgery is on the face, *do not wear make-up* (especially on the area to be treated)
- Wear comfortable, layered clothing (our offices can be quite chilly)
- *If you are ill the day of surgery* (cough, fever, chills, etc), please call to reschedule... we have many immunosuppressed patients who would not survive a severe illness
- Arrive 10 minutes prior to your appointment time to complete paperwork

What to pack/bring with:

- *If you are diabetic or have PRN medications*, please bring them with you (i.e. insulin)
- A snack or beverage (as mentioned above, the procedure can be up to several hours)
- Cases for hearing aides or glasses (we frequently ask you to remove them)
- **Entertainment** (books, magazine, movies, ipad, work, etc.) **WE HAVE WIFI!!** And, as stated above, the day can take several hours (some of which will be spent waiting)



NO SHOW FEE/RESCHEDULE/CANCELLATION POLICY:

Patients who do not arrive for their appointment without a call to cancel at least 48 hours before the appointment time will be considered **NO-SHOW**.

Saguaro Dermatology has the right to charge a fee of \$250.00 for a missed Mohs surgery appointment. "No Show" fees will be billed to the patient. This fee is not covered by insurance and **must be paid in full prior to your next appointment**. We collect card information at the time you schedule your Mohs appointment.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we strive to best serve the needs of all our patients.

ON THE DAY OF SURGERY, YOU WILL BE GIVEN A LIST OF POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS