

MOHS SURGERY INFORMATION

Dear Patient:

Mohs Micrographic Surgery is a special advanced procedure developed by Dr. Frederick Mohs at the University of Wisconsin in the 1930's. This treatment is usually reserved for various skin cancers: tumors which are difficult to treat because of the location, tissue type, size or if they recur despite previous treatment. Using this procedure, the surgeon is able to track all the small extensions of the tumor and remove the tumor completely, sparing normal tissue. Smaller margins mean a smaller final defect and ultimately a smaller scar. Also, Mohs surgery has the highest cure rate of 97-99%.

On the day of the surgery, a local anesthesia will be used. You will be awake during the procedure.

Mohs surgery is done in stages. During each stage a thin layer of tissue is removed and brought into our in-office laboratory; the wound is lightly dressed and you are permitted to return to the waiting room. The tissue is prepared and examined under the microscope. At this point, the Mohs surgeon is able to tell precisely if residual tumor exists and if additional surgery is necessary. The first stage may take as long as an hour, which includes the time in the waiting room, until the laboratory results are available.

Once your tumor is fully removed, the Mohs surgeon will close your wound with sutures. If the Mohs surgeon deems plastic surgery necessary, it will be done that afternoon in our office 99.5% of the time. (Only in rare or unusual circumstances will you be asked to return on another day for the repair.)

On the day of surgery, please take all of your regularly prescribed medications. If you are taking aspirin or other blood thinners, please consult your primary physician whether or not you can stop this medication a few days before your surgery. If it is not recommended, the surgery can still be done. You will just need to make the doctor aware that you are on your blood thinners. You will also need to provide us with a list of your current medications. A good breakfast/lunch should be consumed prior to visiting the office. It is recommended that you dress comfortably (low shoes vs. stocking and high heels: jogging suit vs. business suit).

Please bring a family member or close companion – it may be necessary for them to change your dressing, drive you home or just keep you company! If you enjoy reading, knitting, etc, - bring it along.

After the surgery, an appointment will be made at the checkout desk for wound assessment, management and suture removal. Follow-up visits will be scheduled as needed. Although Mohs surgery has a cure rate of 97-99%, a small number of patients have recurrences; therefore, it is recommended that you keep all follow-up visits.