

BEFORE MOHS MICROGRAPHIC SURGERY

Be well rested and eat a good breakfast. Take your usual medications unless directed otherwise.

We require that you do NOT take any aspirin or aspirin-containing products, such as Anacin or Bufferin, for TWO WEEKS prior to the surgery.

In addition, please do not take ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, etc.). These medications "thin" your blood and may cause more bleeding. You may substitute acetaminophen (Tylenol) if required. Do not drink any alcoholic beverages or engage in strenuous exercise for 24 hours before surgery.

Bathe as usual and shampoo your hair the night before surgery, as your wound and initial dressing have to remain dry for 24 hours after surgery. You should arrange to have someone drive you home after the surgery.

The length of the surgery varies depending on the size and location of the skin cancer and the type of reconstruction to be done. Although the average length of time is approximately three to four hours, you should plan on spending most of the day.

THE DAY OF SURGERY

When you arrive for surgery, you will change into hospital clothing if necessary. It is a good idea to wear loose-fitting clothing and to avoid any "pullover" clothing. Before moving to the operating room, Dr. Sebastien will again discuss the procedure with you and obtain your written consent for the procedure. If you have any additional questions, please feel to ask them at this time.

Once you are in the operating room, we will cleanse the area surrounding your skin cancer with sterile antibacterial soap, and we will place several sterile drapes over you. Dr. Sebastien will then anesthetize (numb) the area of skin containing the cancer with a small local injection (needle). This injection will probably be similar to the one you received when your biopsy was taken. After the tissue has been removed, it will be processed in our laboratory next to the operating room. It usually takes 30-45 minutes to anesthetize the involved area and remove the tissue.

Depending on the amount of tissue removed, processing usually takes an additional 30-45 minutes. You will be asked to remain in the operating room while the tissue is processed for examination, stained, and examined by Dr. Sebastien. If

the microscopic examination of the removed tissue reveals the presence of additional tumor, we will go back and remove more tissue. Most skin cancers are removed in two or three surgical stages.

RECONSTRUCTION

After the skin cancer has been completely removed, a decision will be made on the best method for treating the wound created by the surgery. These methods include letting the wound heal by itself, closing the wound in a side to side fashion with stitches, and closing the wound with a skin graft or a flap. During the preoperative visit, the methods which might be appropriate to your case will be discussed with you; however, in most cases, the best method is determined on an individual basis after surgery. We may complete your reconstruction, or other surgical specialists may be called on to use their unique skills. Occasionally, a tumor may turn out to be larger than was initially anticipated. When that happens, other surgical specialists may become involved after the Mohs procedure has begun.

If the reconstruction is completed by other surgeons, it may take place on the same day or a few days later. If the reconstruction will be extensive, that portion of the operation may require you to be admitted to the hospital.