

PATIENT INFORMATION

Planned Skin Surgery on the Face

You have been put on the waiting list for skin surgery and I hope you find the following information helpful.

If, for whatever reason, you are unable to attend your appointment, please phone:

Appointments Line for Torbay	01803 656321
Appointments Line for Teignmouth	01803 656317

On the day of your operation:

1. You are allowed to eat & drink normally.
2. Please bring with you your up to date list of medications. If you take **Warfarin** then you may need to adjust your **Warfarin** dose. If your INR is usually above 2.5 please omit two doses before your skin surgery. We will check your INR on the day of surgery and provided it is less than 3 we will proceed with surgery. If you take **Rivaroxaban, Apixaban, Edoxaban or Dabigatran** please stop this drug 24 hours before your surgery (In some circumstances your doctor will have recommended you to stop for longer than 24 hours).
3. Skin surgery is done using local anaesthetic to numb the skin. The anaesthetic injection may be painful, but its effect is rapid and it completely numbs the area for the duration of your operation.
4. Your procedure may take up to 30 minutes for a biopsy or curette (scrape) and 45 to 90 minutes if a skin lesion needs to be excised (cut out), depending on the size and location of the lesion. It is difficult to predict the length of complicated procedures and so appointments often run late.
5. We advise you not to drive to and from the hospital, for your procedure and advise that you have someone to accompany you.
6. The procedure will take place in an operating theatre or procedure room. Relatives and carers will only be allowed in the operating room under special circumstances. Please discuss this with the nurse on the day of your procedure.
7. Smoking delays wound healing and so we advise that you stop smoking 48 hours before your procedure and for at least 48 hours afterwards. Please discuss this with your GP surgery if you need help.
8. We advise you to take a bath or shower on the day of your surgery, or the evening before, as this will help reduce the risk of infection.

Potential complications:

Infection:

There is a small risk of infection with any surgical procedure. We minimise this risk by using antiseptic cleansers and careful techniques.

Bleeding:

Bleeding during and after the procedure. Please let us know if you take any medication which may prolong bleeding. By the end of your procedure we will have stopped any bleeding. Before you leave, we will explain to you how you can look after the wound to avoid any oozing or bleeding during the healing period.

Numbness:

The area is numbed with a very effective injection of local anaesthetic (Lidocaine) before your procedure. This injection can be quite painful, but it works very quickly and will last well beyond the length of your operation so that you will not feel any of the surgery. It usually wears off after a few hours.

Scar:

There will be a scar after the area has healed. The size of the scar will depend on your procedure and the site of the lesion. This will be discussed with you at your surgery appointment.

Further Treatment:

Usually it is not possible to guarantee that a lesion has been completely removed until we receive the pathology report following examination of the sample under the microscope.

Some medical procedures explained:

Biopsy:

A small (4mm or 6mm) piece of skin is removed, not including any deeper tissues. A stitch, or two, is inserted afterwards to close the gap which will leave a small straight line scar. Your GP Surgery Nurse will be able to remove any stitches after one week.

Curettage & cautery:

Curettage means the lesion will be scraped off the surface without involving deep tissues. The raw area left behind is then cauterised with an electric current that seals the blood vessels on the surface and stops bleeding. No stitches are involved and the area heals like a skin graze.

Excision:

If you are booked to have an “excision” (removal of a skin lesion by cutting it out) then your scar will be longer than the lesion being removed.

For example:

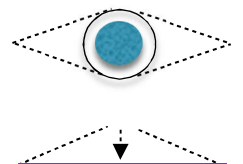
If your skin lesion is like this.....




The surgeon will need to remove a border of normal skin around it, like this.....



To take tension out of the stitches and make the scar stronger the area to be removed is made into an ellipse shape, like this.....





So your scar will be up to three times as long as the skin lesion and end up like  this.....

Please ensure that you are not away on holiday for up to 2 weeks following your procedure.

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.