

Surgery for removal of a skin lesion

Patient information

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

Southport Hospital
Town Lane,
Kew,
Southport,
Merseyside,
PR8 6PN
Telephone:
01704 547 471

Ormskirk Hospital
Dicconson Way,
Wigan Road,
Ormskirk,
Lancashire,
L39 2AZ
Telephone:
01695 577 111

Surgery for the removal of a skin lesion

This leaflet is for patients who require removal and diagnosis of a skin lesion. It explains why this procedure is required, what is involved and any risks or complications that there may be.

If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer or would like further explanation, please ask.

The problem

Skin lesions are basically a patch of skin or a superficial growth that look different from surrounding areas of the skin.

Skin lesions will usually have been assessed by your doctor or dermatology, prior to you attending the Maxillofacial Unit (MFU) Outpatients Department to meet with a surgeon.

Why do I need treatment?

The purpose of the operation is to remove the area of skin of concern, so it can be looked at closely under the microscope. To confirm the nature of the lesion and to prevent further damage to the skin, caused by the possible re-growth of the lesion.

Please call 01704 704714 if you need this leaflet in an alternative format.

For appointments:

Telephone:
01695 656 680

Email:
soh-tr.appointments@merseywestlancs.nhs.uk

Special instructions

If anything is required specific to your treatment it will be discussed with you on the day of your consultation.

Contact information if you are worried about your condition.

Your own doctor

Other useful telephone numbers/contacts:

NHS 111

Stop Smoking Helpline
(Sefton)
0300 100 1000

Stop Smoking Helpline
(West Lancashire)
0800 328 6297

What does the treatment involve?

It is necessary to make an incision into the skin. This will vary in size, depending on the size of the area that needs to be removed. You will be left with a scar. At the end of the procedure depending on the size of the incision, the surgeon will close the skin using stitches and dressings.

It is sometimes not possible to close the skin together, therefore a piece of skin taken from another area will be used as a graft. Stitches generally need to remain in place for between 7-14 days depending on the area and you will either be asked to attend the MFU department, or GP practice to have these removed.

If dressings are required, you will be asked to attend the MFU department twice per week on set days. This will be discussed with you further on the day of your procedure.

The piece of tissue that has been removed will be sent to the Pathology Department for analysis.

We allocate 40-90 minutes per patient for their appointment, depending on the procedure required. We try to keep waiting times down to a minimum, however please take into consideration that circumstances occur out of our control which causes delays. We would therefore advise to keep the morning or afternoon free for your appointment.

What type of anaesthetic is used?

The procedure is normally performed under local anaesthetic. This is an injection into the skin around the whole area that needs to be removed. The injection may be slightly uncomfortable, but once the injection is over the procedure should be completely pain free.

From time to time patients may experience a feeling of palpitations or their heart 'racing'. This is due to the adrenaline in the injection, however this feeling passes in a few moments.

What preparation do you need to do?

It is important to have a light meal up to 2 hours before your treatment. You can drink fluids and take any medicines as normal unless you have been instructed otherwise. Do not drink any alcohol. It is advisable to bring someone with you, to drive you home or escort you on public transport.

If any of your medication changes, you will need to contact the MFU department to ensure it does not affect the surgery going ahead.

During your contact with us, it is important that you are happy with your care and treatment. Please speak to a member of staff, or the ward department sister if you have questions or concerns.

Matron

A matron is available during the hours of 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. During these periods, ward and department staff can contact the matron to arrange to meet with you. Out of hours, a senior nurse can be contacted via the ward or department to deal with any concerns you may have.

Infection control request

Preventing infections is a crucial part of our patient care. To ensure that our standards remain high, our staff have regular infection prevention and control training and their practice is monitored in the workplace.

We ask patients and visitors to assist us in preventing infections, by cleaning their hands at regular intervals and informing staff of areas within the hospital that appear soiled.

As a patient there may be times that you are unsure whether a staff member has cleaned their hands. If in doubt, please ask the staff member and they will be only too happy to put your mind at ease, by cleaning their hands again so that you can see them.

Notes

What will happen when you arrive into hospital?

Once you have booked in at the reception desk, the nurses will introduce themselves and the team who will be treating you. There will be 3 nurses and 1 surgeon with you during the procedure.

Before the procedure takes place, the surgeon will take an up to date medical history and a consent form will need to be signed in addition to the one you signed at your consultation appointment. At the end of the procedure a post-operative instruction pack will be given to you, to take home which will include direct numbers and emergency numbers. Once the procedure has been completed, you will be free to go home as long as you feel well enough to do so.

What can I expect after the procedure?

When the local anaesthetic wears off a few hours after surgery, there will be some discomfort. Painkillers that do not contain aspirin, for example paracetamol or ibuprofen are helpful to reduce swelling and pain. If you are unable to take these due to medical reasons, advise the surgeon who will be able to provide an alternative.

If you have stitches in place, you will be given an antibiotic ointment to apply to the wound 3 times a day until the stitches are removed. We ask you not to cover the area. You will be given full instructions on how to look after the wound on the day of your procedure.

Bruising and swelling are all to be expected, and you will find that bruising in some cases will look very dramatic. Please do not be alarmed, this normally gradually fades over a period of 1-3 weeks.

You should avoid showering for 48 hours after the procedure and it is advisable to use an old pillow case on your bedding, in case of any oozing during the night.

What are the possible complications?

Complications are rare, but there is a risk of bleeding from the operation site. If this happens it can usually be stopped by applying pressure over the area for at least 10 minutes, with a damp swab. If the bleeding does not stop, please contact the department.

Infection may develop in the wound. This would cause redness, swelling or discomfort. If this occurs, you are advised to contact the department on the numbers provided at the time of your operation.

In some cases when the report from the Pathology Department is received, it may indicate wider excision of the area is required. If this is the case, all details and further treatment will be discussed with you at your review appointment.

Do I need to take any time off work?

This largely depends on your job, however as a rough guide we advise to take a few days off work and avoid strenuous exercise and no swimming until the stitches are removed.

Please let the nurses know what form of employment you do, so they can advise accordingly. If dressings are required, we advise you to avoid strenuous exercise and swimming until further notice.

Will I need another appointment?

Yes, you will be given an appointment to discuss the results of your procedure with a member of the MFU team. If appropriate, further treatment will be discussed. Results are generally available in 6-8 weeks for routine work, or earlier for urgent cases.

Who to contact if you have any further questions or concerns

If you are worried or have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact the department and speak to one of the nursing team:

Maxillofacial Unit

Office: 01695 656 966

Reception: 01695 656 334