



ADVANCED DERMATOLOGY

BEL AIR • HUNT VALLEY • TOWSON

Mohs Surgery Preparation Guide

Scheduling Your Appointment: Mohs Surgery is a procedure that may take the entire day. On average, most patients spend between three to five hours in our office, but complex cases can take longer. With that in mind, please remember the following:

- **Do not** schedule any other appointments or work commitments on the day of your Mohs Surgery.
- **Do not** schedule your Mohs Surgery on a date close to a vacation or trip. Please allow for 2 weeks between your surgery and your trip.

Scars: Every surgical procedure, regardless of the surgeon, produces some scarring. Every effort will be made to minimize and diminish scarring, but it may still be visible. The extent of scarring and appearance depends on several factors including:

- The Location of the Cancer
- The Size and Depth of the Cancer
- The Method of Closure
- How Well You Heal

Afterwards: Directly following your Mohs Surgery, you will be advised to avoid the following:

- Heavy Lifting
- Rigorous Exercise
- Excessive Bending

These activities should be avoided until your sutures are removed, or until Dr. Cooper instructs you otherwise. Not following these activity restrictions hinders the healing process and can potentially lead to complications.

Success: Mohs Micrographic Surgery provides patients with the highest cure rate while preserving as much normal tissue as possible. By preserving as much normal tissue as possible, a smaller defect (wound) is created, resulting in a smaller scar. Mohs Surgery is a highly specialized procedure and has a typical success rate of 97% - 99%, even if other forms of treatment have failed.

Please review the important information listed on the back of this page prior to your scheduled Mohs surgical appointment with Dr. Cooper on _____ in our _____ office.

If after reading this guide, you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at the numbers listed below. Our staff is ready to assist you.

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Three Days Before Your Mohs Surgery

- Avoid drinking alcohol before or after Mohs Surgery. Alcohol dilates the blood vessels and can increase bleeding and bruising.
- Refrain from taking over the counter (OTC) pain medications such as Naproxen / Aleve / Ibuprofen / Advil / Motrin / Aspirin unless you are instructed to take them by a physician.
- Gather the following wound care supplies:
 - Antibiotic ointment
 - Non-stick dressing pads
 - Surgical tape

The Day of Your Mohs Surgery

- Eat breakfast. Only a local anesthetic will be used, there is no need to fast. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided in our waiting area.
- Take all prescription medications you normally take each morning.
- Consider bringing reading material, music or even a companion to keep you company.

After Your Mohs Surgery

- A pressure dressing will be placed on the surgical site. This helps reduce the risk of bleeding and infection.
- Wound care will be explained to you in detail. Written care instructions will be given to you to take home.
- Begin following the activity restrictions.
- Call with any questions or concerns. Contact information and phone numbers will be provided on the written care instructions.

What You Should Expect

- Plan for the day. There is no way of determining beforehand how long you will be in the office or how many stages it will take to fully remove your skin cancer. Only after examining the excised skin under a microscope can the surgeon determine when the cancer is removed.
- The defect (wound) created by the removal of your skin cancer may be larger than initially anticipated. The ability to track the extent of the tumor is an important advantage of the Mohs procedure.
- The closure method for your wound will be determined after the cancer is fully removed. Each patient is unique and each treatment is individualized to achieve the best possible result.
- Most patients report little pain following Mohs Surgery. If you need to reduce pain, a dose of extra-strength Tylenol should suffice.
- Swelling may occur in areas around the Eyes, Upper Nose, Upper Cheeks and Lower Forehead. **Swelling tends to follow gravity** and travel down the face and eventually disperse through the neck. This is a normal reaction.
- Your surgical site may first appear to be red, lumpy or bumpy. As time progresses, the redness will fade and the scar will flatten.
- You may experience a sensation of tightness or tingling at the surgical area. This sensation will fade with time. Removing skin cancer frequently involves cutting into sensory nerves. It can take a couple of months for these nerves to repair and the sensation to resolve. This is normal.
- There is a small (less than 1%) chance that your wound may become infected. Signs of infection include:
 - Increasing Pain
 - Spreading Redness
 - Warmth around the Surgical Site
 - Red Streaks
 - Drainage of Pus
 - Fever

If any of the above symptoms occur, contact our office as soon as possible.