

Asheboro Dermatology & Skin Surgery Center

What is Mohs Micrographic Surgery?

Mohs Micrographic Surgery is a specialized surgical technique where skin cancer is precisely removed, and the tissue is processed in the same office to insure that all of the cancer has been eliminated. The procedure is so named in honor of Dr. Frederic Moh, the surgeon who developed the procedure. The Mohs procedure is not necessary for removal of most skin cancers, but it is especially beneficial for those possessing certain characteristics. It is particularly useful for large, aggressive, recurrent or ill defined skin cancers and/or cancers in locations where maximal tissue preservation is crucial (e.g. nose, eyelids, lips, ears, face).

There are many advantages to the Mohs Surgery. The most important is that Mohs surgery provides the highest cure rate over other standard techniques such as routine excision, electrodesiccation/curettage, cryotherapy and radiation. The reason for this is because the tissue is processed in such a way that nearly 100% of the deep and peripheral margins are fully evaluated for tumor extension. Another key advantage of the Mohs technique is that it allows for maximal tissue sparing. In other words, the least amount of normal tissue is removed from the patient while still eliminating the entire skin cancer.

During the Mohs surgical procedure, the patient should expect to spend a significant amount of time in the physician's office on the day of the procedure. First, the tumor is surgically excised and brought to the in-office lab where it is marked, cut, stained and placed on glass slides. These slides are then examined microscopically by the surgeon to determine whether or not the tumor is completely gone. If cancer still remains, more tissue is removed from the patient, and the process is repeated. Once the entire tumor has been completely eliminated, the surgeon will repair the patient's surgical defect. Time is involved in every step of the process, and extra time is needed for cancers that require multiple "stages" of Mohs surgery for complete removal. Between "stages" of Mohs surgery, the patient can relax in the waiting room. That being the case, it is an excellent idea to have a book to read. Some Mohs procedures can be completed in less than 2 hours, but it is not uncommon for a procedure to take between and 2 and 4 hours. It is best to make no other plans (that can't be quickly changed) on the day of your Mohs procedure.

In addition to the above information, you should receive general information regarding surgical procedures here at *Asheboro Dermatology & Skin Surgery Center*. This "Pre-surgical Information Sheet" will advise you about other very important details concerning your surgery. Please read **BOTH** pieces of literature thoroughly so that you will be prepared when your day of surgery arrives. Do not hesitate to call the office with any questions. Additionally, if you need to cancel and reschedule your procedure, please call and give us as much advance notice as possible. Thank you, and we look forward to providing the best surgical care available for you here at *Asheboro Dermatology & Skin Surgery Center*.