



Understanding Your Mohs Micrographic Surgery

Mohs surgery is a specialized surgical procedure used to remove certain types of skin cancer with the highest cure rate possible.

It is performed in stages: a thin layer of tissue is removed, examined under a microscope, and the process repeats until all cancer cells are gone. Some procedures only require 1 stage while others may require several stages. This allows your surgeon to remove the least amount of normal skin while ensuring complete clearance of the cancer.

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Pros

- **Extremely high cure rate** for many skin cancers.
- **Removes the least amount of healthy skin**, favoring the best possible cosmetic outcome.
- Ideal for cancers on the face, ears, scalp, hands, or areas where tissue preservation is important.
- Allows immediate confirmation that all cancer is removed.



Cons

- The visit may be lengthy due to tissue processing times (**each stage takes 45-60 minutes** at a minimum).
 - **Requires stitches**, which must stay in place for 1-3 weeks depending on the location.
 - **Exercise and activity limitations.**
- Leaves a smaller linear scar (which may fade over time).
- Small risk of bleeding, infection, or wound-opening after repair.

What to Expect

- The procedure is done in the office using local numbing injections. A thin layer of the cancerous tissue is removed.
- You will wait in the office with a bandage while the tissue is processed and examined under a microscope.
- If cancer cells remain, additional layers are removed until the area is clear.
- After all cancer is confirmed to be removed, the wound is repaired with stitches, a flap, or a skin graft depending on size and location. This repair may be done at our office or with a plastic surgeon (requires separate appointment with plastic surgery office for the same day).
- You will go home the same day.

Aftercare and Restrictions

- Keep the area clean and change the bandage with ointment.
- Showering is allowed after 24 hours, let water run gently over the area and pat dry. **Do not submerge in any form of water including baths, ocean, pools, and hot tubs.**
- **Avoid heavy lifting, exercise, bending, or strenuous activity for 1-3 weeks**, depending on the site and repair type.
- Expect mild swelling or bruising, especially on the face.
- Use sunscreen daily on the healing area once cleared by your provider.
 - Contact the office for increasing redness, fever, drainage, or significant pain.

***Disclaimer: This summary is intended for general information only. It does not include every detail about the procedure. All specific instructions, risks, and expectations will be discussed fully with you in the office at the time of your visit.