

DERMATOLOGY + PLASTIC SURGERY

For Your Best Self

A FOREFRONT PRACTICE

NANCY MARCHELL, MD MOHS SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

Mohs surgery is named after Dr. Mohs. It consists of the surgical removal of a cancerous lesion with a scalpel, waiting in our office while the doctor prepares the specimen and checks it for residual cancer, then repeating this process until your skin is free of cancer. This is followed by repair of your wound.

PREPARING FOR MOHS

Most cases can be completed in three or fewer stages, requiring less than four hours.

However, no one can predict how extensive a cancer will be. Therefore, we ask that you reserve **the entire morning (2 to 4 hours)** for surgery, to allot for removal of skin cancer cells and repair.

Eat breakfast prior to appointment time. Bring snacks necessary related to dietary needs.
Bring a book for entertainment.

Bring a jacket or sweater for your comfort. Please be advised, clothing could possibly be soiled during the procedure. Wear something washable and comfortable!

If the defect/area removed is larger than expected, you **may be** referred to another physician, such as our plastic surgeons for the repair of the defect.

Continue all medications as prescribed by physicians, unless otherwise advised by Dr. Marchell.
Special Instructions: _____

THINGS TO AVOID

Avoid **Aspirin**, NSAIDS/**Ibuprofen** products, and fish oil 7 days before surgery and 2 days after surgery, as both increase the risk of bleeding. You may take non-aspirin products such as **Extra Strength Tylenol** for pain. Avoid alcoholic beverages 1 day before and after surgery as alcohol promotes bleeding.

Avoid stretching, bending, or physical activity that could strain the wound in the first 24 to 48 hours after surgery. Such actions slow the healing process and increase the risk of bleeding.

Avoid swimming in the ocean, pool, hot tub, using a spa or taking a tub bath while sutures are in place. Showering is permitted.

WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Leave the dressing in place for 24 hours. Keep the dressing dry for the first day. You may shower beginning the morning after surgery, as long as the dressing is kept on during the shower and is changed immediately afterwards. This is especially important for lower legs since bacteria may run into the wound during the shower if left uncovered.

Try to sleep with your head/surgery site elevated on 2 pillows to help decrease swelling and bleeding for facial sites. If swelling or bruising occurs, apply ice on top of the dressing for 10 minutes on/10 minutes off for one (1) hour, repeating two (2) to three (3) times a day. This will help decrease swelling and bruising.

BEGINNING THE DAY AFTER SURGERY, change the dressing **ONCE A DAY** until the sutures/stitches are removed, as directed below, unless your doctor specifies otherwise. The following are important steps to promote optimal healing with minimal discomfort and to prevent infection and crust formation:

1. Cleanse the wound with a vinegar-water solution (mix 1 tablespoon white household vinegar with 2 cups of bottled or boiled water - keep in refrigerator). Pour vinegar water solution onto cotton ball or gauze and cleanse wound so that it is free of dried blood and crust. Gently pat dry.
2. Apply Vaseline, Aquaphor, or prescribed ointment to the area with a Q-tip.
3. Cover the wound with a band-aid or non stick Telfa dressing kept in place with paper tape.

PAIN, DISCOMFORT, AND BLEEDING

It is normal after surgery to experience some discomfort, swelling, and bleeding. If pain persists, alternate Tylenol with Ibuprofen (Advil) by taking 1 Tylenol then 3 hours later taking 1-2 Ibuprofen then 3 hours later another Tylenol, etc. If you notice any unusual swelling, bruising, reddening, or discharge, please call the office at 321.241.1160.

If bleeding occurs, press clean gauze directly on the wound for 20 minutes with firm and continuous pressure. If this does not stop the bleeding, contact the office immediately 321.241.1160 or go to your nearest emergency room.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT

Make sure you schedule an appointment for your wound to be checked and/or to have your sutures/stitches removed. Please also confirm your next skin cancer examination is scheduled.

We hope to make your surgical experience as comfortable & convenient as possible. Please let us know how we can help you further.

Notify the office at 321-241-1160 immediately if the wound shows any sign of infection such as marked redness or drainage which may require a prescription for antibiotics.