

# About your skin surgery

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**Dermatology**

**Patient Information Leaflet**

This leaflet is for anyone who needs an operation to remove a skin lesion (lump or growth).

## **Why are you having skin surgery?**

It is not always possible to distinguish between skin cancers and non-cancerous conditions by observation alone.

Removal allows it to be analysed so that a diagnosis can be made.

## **Types of operation**

**Excision Biopsy:** where a lesion is cut out and the skin is stitched back together. If the lesion is large only a small sample may be removed initially to enable a diagnosis to be made.

**Shave Excision/Curettage:** where the surface of the skin is scraped away (curettage) and then the skin is sealed with heat to stop any bleeding. The area will scab over and heal usually within a few days.

**Punch Biopsy:** where a small sample of skin is removed and the wound is closed either by a stitch or a seaweed (kaltostat) dressing.

## **What are the risks?**

Most operations are straight forward; however, there is a small chance of side effects or complications which are listed below:

- Bleeding
- Infection
- Scarring
- Wound Breakdown
- Bruising
- Reaction to local anaesthetic
- Nerve Damage

## **Before your appointment:**

Please inform the doctor at the hospital if you have any allergies.  
Continue to take your prescribed medication.

If you take **Warfarin** tablets, please arrange with your GP surgery to have a blood test to check your INR a few days before your appointment. We are unable to operate if your INR is above 3.

## **Your anaesthetic**

Your operation will be carried out under local anaesthetic. You will be given an injection to numb the area of skin around the lesion. You will be awake throughout the procedure.

**It is advisable not to drive after a local anaesthetic; please arrange for someone to take you home.**

## **On the day of the appointment**

You will have the opportunity to have any questions answered by the Doctor prior to surgery.

- Bring all your medicines, tablets, inhalers and sprays with you, as some medications can affect this type of surgery.
- Eat and drink as normal.
- Remove all nail varnish and keep make-up to a minimum.
- You may have to wait for your operation; it is advisable to bring a book or magazine to pass the time.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form agreeing to the operation.
- After the operation you will be given an information leaflet on how to look after the wound.

## **If your operation was on your:**

Head or face: sleep with an extra pillow in bed.

Leg or foot: elevate your leg whilst sitting and put your leg on a pillow in bed.

## Follow up care

Some patients will not require a follow up after their operation. You will receive a letter informing you of the operation result.

If you do require follow up care, you will be given an appointment to see a Doctor or Nurse as you may need to discuss the results or further treatments.

Ask if you need to refrain from exercise, sporting or manual work.

### Leaflet Details

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## **Other formats**

If you would like to receive this information in an alternative format, then please contact : 01539 795497.

## **Travelling to our hospitals**

For the best way to plan your journey visit our website: <http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 01539 795497.

## **Useful Contact Details**

NHS 111 (for 24 hour urgent health advice): telephone 111

## **Your Information**

If you would like to know how we use, share, disclose and secure your information and your rights of access to the information we hold about you, visit the Trust's website: <http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01539 795497.

## **Evidence**

Details of the evidence used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: Patient Information Officer at 01524 512476.

## **Feedback**

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment, please speak to a member of staff or contact PALS on 01539 795497.

UHMBT is a no smoking Trust. Smoking is not permitted on any of the hospital sites. You can contact the NHS North Lancashire Stop Smoking services on the number below:

NHS Quit Squad - **0800 328 6297**

If you live in Cumbria, please call **0300 013 3000** to find a local pharmacy who are offers 1-2-1 support and nicotine replacement therapy.

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