

Mohs Surgery Further Information and FAQs

What to Expect During the Procedure

Mohs surgery may take several hours, depending on how many layers are needed. It is usually best to plan around the procedure taking the whole day.

1. Preparation: The area is cleaned and numbed with local anaesthesia.
2. Tissue Removal: A thin layer of tissue is removed.
3. Microscopic Examination: The tissue is mapped, processed, and examined under a microscope.
4. Additional Layers (if needed): If cancer cells remain, another layer is removed only from the affected area.
5. Wound Repair: Once all cancer is removed, the wound is repaired. This may involve stitches, a skin flap, a graft, or allowing the area to heal naturally. For larger or more complex excisions sometimes the reconstruction is planned the next day under a general anaesthetic. Your surgeon will talk you through your reconstructive plan and different options.

Recovery and Healing

Most patients return home the same day. Some mild swelling, redness, or bruising is common. Stitches are typically removed within 1–2 weeks. Full healing and scar maturation may take several months and up to a year before the final cosmetic result. You will be given detailed wound care instructions.

Risks and Side Effects

Mohs surgery is very safe, but possible risks include:

- Bleeding or infection
- Scarring
- Temporary or permanent numbness
- Rare damage to nearby structures
- Recurrence

Your surgeon will discuss these risks prior to the procedure.

Is Mohs Surgery Right for You?

Mohs surgery may be recommended if:

- Your skin cancer is in a high-risk or visible area
- The cancer has returned after previous treatment
- The tumour has poorly defined edges
- Tissue preservation is a priority

The Mohs surgeon will determine the best treatment option for your specific condition.

Aftercare and Follow-Up

Regular skin exams are important after treatment. Sun protection helps prevent future skin cancers. Notify your GP if you notice new or changing skin lesions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is Mohs surgery painful?

The procedure is done under local anaesthesia, so pain is minimal. Injection of local anaesthetic will cause mild discomfort and after this has worn off, there will be some further discomfort although this is usually manageable with over-the-counter pain relief.

Will I have a scar?

All skin surgery will result in a scar, but Mohs surgery minimises scarring by preserving healthy tissue and using careful reconstruction techniques.

How long does the procedure take?

It varies, but most procedures take several hours due to the time needed to examine tissue between stages.