



DERMATOLOGIST MEDICAL GROUP OF NORTH COUNTY, INC.

Mohs Micrographic Surgery

Mohs Surgery, more formally called Mohs Micrographic Surgery, is a method used to remove skin cancer. The procedure was first developed by Frederic E. Mohs, M.D. in the 1930's and has since been refined.

The Mohs procedure involves a layer-by-layer removal of skin that contains cancer cells. More specifically, here are the typical steps in the procedure.

1. The skin around the cancer cells is numbed with an anesthetic.
2. Any visible, raised area of the tumor is removed first, by using a small cupped instrument called a curette.
3. A thin, circular layer of tissue is removed from the involved site.
4. The tissue is marked in a manner to identify right and left as well as top and bottom sections.
5. The tissue is made into slides by a tech working in the office.
6. The entire bottom side and outer edges of the removed tissue layer are examined under a microscope immediately by the doctor.
7. If any cancer cells are seen under the microscope, its location is identified (according to marked section) and an additional thin layer of tissue is removed only from the identified section where cancer cells remain.
8. The process of microscopic examination and removal of additional layers of tissue continues until no more cancer cells are seen under the microscope, we refer to these as "levels".

The first level takes typically one hour from start to finish; subsequent levels usually do not take as long.

Since the Mohs surgical technique only removes diseased tissue in the specific area in which it resides, more of the surrounding normal tissue can be saved. Another advantage of the Mohs technique is that the "microscopic examination and removal method" reveals the skin cancer down to its roots, allowing for complete removal of the cancer.

What to expect today:

Today you are having Mohs surgery with Dr. _____. Your nurses will be _____ and _____.

After your first level (as described above) is taken, your nurses will apply a pressure bandage. We will have you wait in the lobby while your slides are prepared and read.

We ask that you remain on the premises due to safety reasons. Once your slides are read, you will be brought back to take another level if any of the margins of the tissue are positive for cancer, apply your final bandage for that day, or close your surgical site. We understand that this can be very tedious procedure, and make for a very long day.

We thank you for choosing Dermatologist Medical Group for your Mohs Surgery needs, and hope that we have made you as comfortable as possible.

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