

Lanier  
Dermatology  
& Skin Cancer Specialists



Answers To  
Your Questions  
About

**MOHS  
MICROGRAPHIC  
SURGERY**

**MOHS MICROGRAPHIC SURGERY**

## What is MOHS Surgery?

Developed by Dr. Frederic Mohs, MOHS surgery is a highly specialized treatment for the removal of skin cancers. Through direct microscopic examination and specialized marking techniques, MOHS surgery removes only cancerous areas, and preserves as much healthy tissue as possible. This is especially useful when removing cancers from the face, neck and ears.

MOHS surgery has demonstrated a cure rate exceeding 97% for newly diagnosed, non-recurrent skin cancers. It is the preferred method of treatment for skin cancers in areas where healthy tissue preservation is essential, for skin cancers that have failed other treatment methods and for skin cancers that are large and have indistinct borders.

The advantages of MOHS surgery include:

- The removal of as little tissue as possible.
- Highest cure rate for skin cancers.
- The procedure is done in office – no hospitalization is required.

## Is MOHS Surgery Covered by Insurance?

MOHS surgery is a widely accepted treatment for skin cancers of the face, neck and other areas where minimizing healthy tissue loss is essential. Our practice accepts most insurance plans, including Medicare.

Your expected cost for the procedure depends on your specific insurance coverage, including deductibles and co-pays. Please check with your insurance company regarding your benefits, and any preauthorization that may be necessary prior to the procedure.

Payment plans are available upon request. We do not want you to avoid treatment for a skin cancer due to financial constraints.

# What to do to Prepare for Your Surgery

## Prior to Your Surgery

A nurse from our office will contact you a week prior to your surgery with pre-operative instructions. Pay special attention to the following three precautions:



**1. If approved by the prescribing physician, avoid ALL aspirin and NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) for at least one week prior to surgery!** These medications may prolong bleeding times and complicate your surgery. This includes Anacin<sup>®</sup>, Bufferin<sup>®</sup>, Alka-Selzer<sup>®</sup>, baby aspirin, Aleve<sup>®</sup>, Advil<sup>®</sup>, Motrin<sup>®</sup>, Goody<sup>®</sup> powders.

**2. If you are taking a blood thinner (Warafin<sup>®</sup>, Coumadin<sup>®</sup>, Plavix<sup>®</sup>), you may be asked to**

**discontinue this medication a few days prior to your surgery.** Please check with the prescribing doctor, and call our office at least one week prior to your surgery.

**3. Avoid alcoholic beverages for 24 hours before surgery, as they can increase bleeding times.**

**Continue all other medications as prescribed.**

## The Day of Surgery: A Day-Long Appointment

Plan to be in our clinic all day on the date of your surgery. If you choose, you may have a companion wait with you. You may also want to arrange for transportation home from the office after your procedure, although this is usually not necessary.

- Eat a normal breakfast.
- Please do not wear makeup, or any other items that will cover the surgical site.
- Your appointment will be scheduled early in the morning. Please arrive on time.
- The surgery will take place in stages. This may require you to be at our office for the entire day. Please do not make other commitments.

**The Procedure:** The area around the skin cancer will be numbed with a local anesthetic similar to when you had your original biopsy. Afterward, the visible cancer and a thin outer layer of tissue will be removed and marked. A temporary dressing will be placed over the surgical site. The MOHS technician will process your tissue so that it can be examined microscopically by the physician. This is the first “stage” of the procedure.

Although the surgical procedure takes only 10-15 minutes, processing and examining the tissue can take 1-2 hours. Depending upon the depth of the cancer, several surgical stages and microscopic examinations may be required. We cannot predict in advance the number of stages necessary or the time that will be required to adequately treat your skin cancer.

During the processing of the tissue, you will be asked to wait in the patient waiting area. Your companion may get a snack or lunch for you at this time. After all of the cancer has been removed, the physician will choose the best method available to repair the wound. This could include the use of a skin graft or a flap.

Although any form of treatment for skin cancer will leave a scar, MOHS surgery usually minimizes scarring because it removes as little tissue as possible.



Kevin L. Smith, MD

## After Surgery

Pain following MOHS surgery is usually minimal, and can be treated with Tylenol®. Please continue to avoid the aspirin products previously listed for 3-4 days after the procedure. If you experience increasing pain, or if pain is not relieved by Tylenol® or other prescribed pain medication, please call our office. The stitches from your surgery will be removed within 5-7 days at your follow-up appointment.

Lanier  
Dermatology  
& Skin Cancer Specialists

A graphic element consisting of three wavy blue lines positioned below the text of the logo.

## Follow-up

At least once a year you should have a skin exam of the treated area, to include a general evaluation for any other potential problem areas.

The best protection against future skin cancer is prevention:

- Avoid sun exposure, especially between 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Use a sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection of at least 15 SPF any time you are in the sun (including cloudy days). Pay special attention to face, ears, neck, hands and forearms.
- Keep regular follow-up appointments with your dermatologist.

### Appointment Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Please read all information carefully.



(770) 538-0208

[www.lanierdermatology.com](http://www.lanierdermatology.com)

Lanier Dermatology & Skin Cancer Specialists  
605 South Enota Drive  
(Sherwood Plaza)  
Gainesville, GA 30501