



Dr. *Francis* T. Hall

EAR, NOSE, THROAT, HEAD & NECK

Skin cancer excision care

Skin cancers are treated by excising the skin cancer with a margin of healthy tissue to help ensure all the cancer is removed. The incision is closed with sutures and a simple dressing is placed over the wound. The piece of skin removed is sent to the pathology laboratory.

What to expect?

The skin cancer is excised under local anaesthetic in the clinic. You are awake but the area of interest will be numb (just like when you have a filling at the dentist). Dr Hall will inject some local anaesthetic into the area. After a few minutes the area will be numb. You will not feel any pain, but you will still feel touching and pulling. Dr Hall will test the area to make sure it is numb before proceeding.

The skin cancer is excised. Any bleeding is controlled with cautery, this seals any blood vessels. The incision is closed with sutures.

The site of the skin cancer excision may be a little sore and swollen for about 5 days.

How can you care for yourself at home?

Activity:

- As there is no sedation it is safe to drive after your biopsy.
- In order to reduce the chance of bleeding, avoid strenuous activities, such as bicycle riding, jogging, weight lifting, or aerobic exercise, for 2-3 days after your procedure.
- Usually, patients go back to work either the same day or the following day. If someone has a very dirty job and there is a high chance the area will get dirty, it is best to take 3 days off work.

Incision care:

- For the first two days following the excision of the skin cancer, keep the incision dry. After two days you can get the incision wet. Remember to pat the incision dry after you shower and not to rub the incision.
- Your wound is covered with Steri Strips. Steri Strips are thin adhesive strips which are placed over your incision to help it heal. Keep the Steri Strips dry for the first 48 hours; then you may gently cleanse the area daily with soap and water. You should avoid scrubbing or rubbing the incision site.
- Leave the Steri Strips in place until they fall off on their own. They will usually fall off the skin within 10 to 14 days. Try to keep them dry as much as possible to prevent infection.
- Keep sun off your wound for 6 months. This avoids the wound going a dark colour (post inflammatory hyperpigmentation). There are three ways to keep the sun off the wound: wear clothing that covers the area, use sunblock or simply cover the wound with tape. Dr Hall recommends ½ inch light brown micropore tape (a 3M product). You can buy this product from most pharmacies.

Pain medicines:

- The pain afterwards is usually mild but can be moderate. Severe pain is not expected.
- Dr Hall recommends simple pain medication such as paracetamol (Panadol) and ibuprofen (Brufen). It is best to take regular pain medication for two days following the biopsy.

Problems:

- Very occasionally an infection may occur. If the pain is getting worse, the area is more swollen or if you feel very unwell, please contact Dr Hall straight away.

When do I get my results?

- Usually, the pathologist sends a typed signed report to Dr Hall about one to two weeks after the surgery. Occasionally it may take the pathologist longer to issue a report either because of the complexity of your case or because of a higher than usual workload. Dr Hall will contact you by phone or text once he receives the pathologist's report in his inbox. He will advise you what the next step is to manage your condition.

Follow up appointment:

- Dr Hall usually sees his skin cancer patients about 5-7 days later for removal of sutures. His secretary Rebecca will arrange your follow up appointment for you.

Any problems call or text Dr Francis Hall on 021 733 677

Dr.  T. Hall