

Skin Care Physicians of Ga
308 Coliseum Drive
Suite 200
Macon, Georgia 31217
(478) 742-2180

Skin Care Physicians of Georgia Board Certified Mohs and reconstructive Surgeons

*****PATIENT EDUCATION*****

If you are reading this, you or someone you care about was diagnosed with skin cancer and we have recommended Mohs surgery as the best treatment option.

*****SKIN CANCER*****

SKIN CANCER BASICS

The words “cancer” and “surgery” can be frightening. Learning what you need to know about your condition and treatment from a trusted source can help put your mind at ease.

Skin cancer is common, occurring more commonly than all other cancers combined. Risk factors for developing skin cancer include long term sun exposure, fair skin, genetics, a suppressed immune system and less commonly, trauma and certain chemical exposure. Each year, doctors diagnose three main types of skin cancer: basal cell carcinoma (BCC; >4 million cases), squamous cell carcinoma (SCC >1 million cases) and melanoma (>195,000 cases). When detected early, the vast majority of skin cancers are curable. Left untreated, however, skin cancer can continue to grow, become disfiguring and pose harm to your overall health. In some cases, SCC and melanoma can spread to other parts of your body and become life-threatening. Early detection and prompt treatment result in the best outcome.

SKIN CANCER TREATMENTS

Treatment options for skin cancer vary depending on the type, size and location on the body, the patient’s health, and other factors. Treatments include topical medication, scraping and burning, freezing, radiation and excision (removal with a scalpel). After routine excision, which differs from Mohs surgery, the tissue is sent to the lab for examination and results at a later time, usually several days to a week. Rarely, oral and injected medications, including immunotherapy and chemotherapy, are used for advanced skin cancer.

While there are many viable skin cancer treatment options, some treatment options have the potential to leave behind skin cancer cells which can result in a skin cancer recurrence, these cells are not visible to the naked eyes and can be thought of as “roots” (like roots of a weed or tree) that extend beyond the visible part of the skin cancer. If all the cancer cells in those roots aren’t completely removed, the cancer will grow back and require further treatment.

Skin Care Physicians of Ga
308 Coliseum Drive
Suite 200
Macon, Georgia 31217
(478) 742-2180

MOHS MICROGRAPHIC SURGERY

Mohs surgery is performed by doctors who are specially trained to fulfill three roles:

- 1) The surgeon who removes the cancerous tissue
- 2) The pathologist who analyzes the lab specimen
- 3) The surgeon who closes or reconstructs the wound

Mohs surgery offers the highest cure rate and lowest recurrence rate. This is due to the ability to assess 100% of the skin margin at the time of skin cancer removal. The procedure is done in stages, all in one visit, while the patient waits between each stage. When you arrive for your appointment, the surgical assistant will direct you to the surgical suite and obtain vital signs and a detailed medical history, preparing you for your surgery. The surgeon will then confirm the diagnosis and location of the skin cancer to be treated and gently anesthetize the area to be treated. The surgeon will then remove the cancerous tissue. After removing a layer of tissue, the surgeon examines it under a microscope in an on-site lab. It may take up to an hour to prepare the removed cancerous tissue for microscopic evaluation. If any cancerous cells remain, the surgeon knows the exact area where they remain and removes another layer of tissue from that precise location, while sparing as much healthy tissue as possible. This process is repeated until no cancerous cells remain.

Mohs surgery is the gold standard for treating many basal cell carcinoma (BCC), squamous cell carcinomas (SCC) including those in cosmetically and functionally important areas such as the eyes, nose, lips, ears, scalp, fingers, toes or genitalia. Mohs surgery is also recommended for BCCs and SCCs that are large, aggressive, or growing rapidly, have indistinct edges or have recurred following previous treatment.

RECONSTRUCTING THE WOUND

After clearing the skin cancer with Mohs surgery, we will decide the best individualized option for wound healing. Wound healing is accomplished one of three ways:

1. Closing the wound with stitches
2. Allowing the body to heal the wound (second intent healing)
3. Closing the wound with a flap or skin graft

Any form of therapy will leave a scar. The Mohs procedure tends to minimize this as much as possible. We make every effort to obtain the optimal cosmetic results for you and work in conjunction with other specialists in the field of cosmetic and cutaneous surgery. In some cases, your Mohs surgeon may coordinate the repair of your wound with another specialist. In most

Skin Care Physicians of Ga
308 Coliseum Drive
Suite 200
Macon, Georgia 31217
(478) 742-2180

instances, however, the Mohs surgeon will repair the wound immediately after obtaining clear margins.

ADVANTAGES OF MOHS SURGERY

Efficient, cost-effective treatment:

- Single-visit outpatient surgery
- Local anesthesia
- Lab work done on-site

Precise Results:

- Physician examines 100% of tumor margins
- Spares healthy tissue
- Leaves smallest scar possible

The highest cure rate:

- Up to 99% cure for skin cancer that has not been treated before
- Up to 94% cure for skin cancer that has recurred after previous treatment

GETTING READY FOR MOHS SURGERY

Try to get a good night's rest and eat a good breakfast. Regarding your medications; **Please bring all of your medicines in their original containers and/or a complete list of the medicines.** Please continue to take your medications as directed unless otherwise directed. **If you are taking arthritis medicine such as aspirin or Advil, B.C. powders, etc. and only for arthritis or aches and pains – please do not take these for 14 days prior to your scheduled surgery. These medicines may result in excessive bleeding.** Please see the attached list of medicines that contain aspirin.

If, however you are taking aspirin for your heart, any history of a stroke or other reason directed by your doctor do not stop them. If you are taking other prescribed blood thinners continue to do so unless you are told by our office to stop them. Please call our office if you have any questions.

It is a good idea to bring a book or magazine with you on the day of the surgery. Also, it is a good idea to bring a jacket or a sweater (that is NOT a pullover) in case you get a little cold, as we keep the temperature slightly cool. The procedure may take a full day, much of which you will spend in the waiting room. Please do not drink alcoholic beverages prior to your surgery as it can thin your blood. If you smoke, if possible, stop for two (2) weeks before and two (2)

weeks after as this may potentially interfere with healing. If you can't stop smoking all together, try to smoke less than ½ pack a day. It may be relaxing to have company while you are sitting in the waiting room. It is recommended that you have someone drive you home. We ask that you limit the number of people accompanying you to one or two people because of limited space in our waiting room. Also, it is helpful **not** to wear makeup if the skin cancer is located on the face.

Skin Care Physicians of Ga
308 Coliseum Drive
Suite 200
Macon, Georgia 31217
(478) 742-2180

FOLLOW UP AFTER MOHS SURGERY

A follow up period of at least five years is essential after the wound has healed. After the wound is healed, you will be asked to return in three months, one year and annually thereafter for five years. Your follow up may be handled by your referring physician, should there be a recurrence, it usually will be within the first year following surgery. Studies have shown that once you develop a skin cancer, there is a possibility that you will develop others in the years ahead.

We recommend that you be seen once a year by your referring physician or dermatologist so that he/she may evaluate whether you have developed any new skin cancers. Should you notice any suspicious areas, it is best to check with your physician to see if a biopsy is indicated.

SUN EXPOSURE AFTER MOHS SURGERY

As mentioned, sunlight probably is the main contributing factor in the development of skin cancer, and patients who develop one skin cancer often develop more at a later time. When you go into the sun, we recommend that you liberally apply sunscreen with a protection factor of 30 to all exposed areas, including the tops of your ears. It is best to apply sunscreen about 15 minutes before going outdoors. Be sure to reapply it liberally after swimming or exercising since most sunscreen washes off with water or perspiration. In addition to a sunscreen, you may wish to protect yourself from the sun. Yes, you may lead a normal lifestyle if you take precautions.

Skin Care Physicians of Ga
308 Coliseum Drive
Suite 200
Macon, Georgia 31217
(478) 742-2180

***** SUMMARY OF IMPROTANT INFO TO PREPARE FOR MOHS SURGERY *****

- (1) **Confirmation of appointment:** Our office will text/email you 3 days prior to confirm your appointment. It is the patient's responsibility to confirm both the date and time of their surgical appointment. If an emergency occurs and you need to reschedule your appointment, please call our office as soon as possible (478) 745.2180. Bring a light jacket or a non-pullover sweater.
- (2) **Medication:** It is absolutely necessary that you bring any medication or an accurate list of each medication including dose and number of times each day you take it. If unsure, please call your prescribing doctor to confirm your medication dosing prior to your Mohs surgery appointment. You may have your primary doctor fax a copy of your medication list and any other important information to (478) 745-2623.
- (3) **Blood Thinners:** If you take aspirin, aspirin like products, Coumadin, Plavix, Persantine or any other blood thinner **DO NOT DISCONTINUE** any of these medications. If you use arthritis medicine **only** for arthritis, you may hold your arthritis medicine for 1 week. If you take aspirin for both arthritis and to thin your blood, do **not** stop it.
- (4) **Questions concerning surgery:** Please remember there are no silly questions only unanswered questions, so please let us know if you or your family have any questions. It is our privilege to provide surgical care to our patients and family. Should you have any concerned that we have not completely answered, please let out staff or your provider know. Thank you for choosing Skin Care Physicians of Georgia.
- (5) If you have had a medical or surgical problem that occurred between the time of your appointment being scheduled and the day of surgery, please notify us as soon as possible. This is very important.
- (6) If you are planning to go out of town after your surgery notify the office staff as all patients have activity restrictions following surgery.
- (7) Be sure to stop any Fish Oil products, Vitamin E, Garlic, Ginko Baloba, Ginger, Gensing, Wine or Alcohol 10 days prior to your surgical procedure.

MEDICATION PRECAUTIONS FOR SKIN SURGERY PATIENTS

These instructions are to be **FOLLOWED BEFORE AND AFTER YOUR SURGERY**. If you are on any antirheumatiod, antiarthitic, circulation or anticoagulant medication (e.g. Mortin, Naprosyn, Persantine, or Coumadin), please inform us.

Please consult your physician before stopping any prescribed medication. Do not stop any prescribed medications without discussing with your physicians

Skin Care Physicians of Ga
308 Coliseum Drive
Suite 200
Macon, Georgia 31217
(478) 742-2180

The following is a list of the more common medications and substances that **can INCREASE your tendency to bleed.**

Advil	Childrens' Aspirin	Feldene	Phenaphen
Alcohol	Clinoril	Fiorinal	Quagesic
Alka Seltzer	Congesprin	4-Way Cold Tabs	Robasisal
Anacin	Cope	Ibuprofen	Ruffin
Anaprox	Correidin	Indocin	Sine off
Anaproxin	Coumadin	Indomethacin	Sine Aid
APC	Darvvon	Mecolomen	Trandate
SASA	Darvon with aspirin	Medipren	Trental
Ascodeen	Dolobid	Midol	Trigesic
Ascriptin	Dristan	Motrin	Trilisate
Aspirin	Easprin	Nalfon	Vanquish
Bufferin	Ecotrin	Naprosyn	Voltren
Brufen	Empirin	Nuprin	Zorpin
Cheracol Capsules	Excedrin	Percodan	BC Powders
Vitamin E	Goody's Powders	Stanback	Aleve

Avoid these products 10 days before surgery:

- Ginko Baloba
- Garlic Supplement
- Wine
- Alcohol
- Vitamin E
- Fish oil
- Gensing
- Ginger

** It is recommended that you discontinue all other nutritional supplements at least 1 week prior to surgery as many of these can increase bleeding.