



2307 Homer Clayton Drive
Guntersville, AL 35976
PHONE: 256-571-8770

Surgery Date & Time:

Frequently Asked Questions About
Mohs Micrographic Surgery

ALL SURGERIES MUST HAVE A VERBAL CONFIRMATION THE DAY BEFORE. PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE TO CONFIRM OR THE SURGERY WILL BE CANCELLED & FILLED WITH SOMEONE ELSE

1. *What is Mohs surgery?*

Mohs surgery is a very specialized technique for removing skin cancers. It is a slow methodical process that has the highest cure rates for skin cancer and involves removing as little tissue as possible.

2. *Is Mohs surgery right for me?*

Mohs surgery is appropriate for just about any skin cancer on the head or neck, any recurrent skin cancer, or any skin cancer on a part of the body where it is critical to spare as much normal tissue as possible.

3. *How long will the surgery take?*

The surgery itself may last from an hour to many hours, so it is important for you to completely clear your schedule on the day of surgery. We strongly advise you **NOT** to make any other doctor appointments or other appointments on the day of surgery, as these will interfere with the care of your skin cancer.

4. *What should I tell the surgeon about before my surgery?*

Be sure to tell Dr. Wharton about any of the following:

- Has this skin cancer ever been treated with surgery before other than just with a biopsy?
- Do you have a pacemaker or defibrillator in your heart?
- Do you have any heart or heart valve abnormalities? Artificial joints?
- Do you take blood-thinning medications such as aspirin, Plavix, or Coumadin? Do you take oral supplements such as Vitamin E, Ginseng, Garlic, or Ginkgo? Do you have a history of bleeding problems?

- Do you suffer from kidney disease.
- Have you undergone (kidney, heart, liver, or lung) organ transplantation?
- Do you take medications that suppress your immune system?
- Do you smoke cigarettes? Do you drink more than two drinks a day of alcoholic beverage?
- Do you have hepatitis or HIV or any other blood-borne disease?
- Do you have any allergy to anesthetics such as lidocaine?
- Do you have to take antibiotics with procedures for any reason?
- Have you noticed any new lumps or bumps under the skin, particularly in your neck?

5. *What should I do on the day of my surgery?*

- We will allow one person to accompany you during your surgery.
- Bring some reading material.
- Eat a full breakfast.
- Arrive TEN minutes before your surgery appointment - if you are more than 15 minutes late, we may have to re-schedule your surgery.
- Be patient! It takes time to do this procedure the right way.

6. *What kind of problems can happen after surgery?*

In rare circumstances patients can have trouble with bleeding or infection after surgery. If you are concerned you may be having these consequences, please call our office at 256-571-8770. If you are calling after business hours, please visit your local emergency department. Patients should also note that scarring is inevitable after surgery. The appearance of a surgery scar usually improves for 6-12 months as the scar "matures." Scars may sometimes heal thick or thin, and the final appearance depends on many factors, including size, depth, and location. A change in feeling (sensation) often occurs around the surgery site, and in some areas, there is a risk of motor nerve damage.

7. *Will I need to follow up with the Mohs surgeon after my surgery?*

Yes! If sutures (stitches) are used to close your surgical wound, they will need to be removed anywhere from five days to three weeks after the surgery date. If your surgical wound is healing "from the inside out," Dr. Wharton will want to evaluate you to make sure you are healing appropriately.