

# Minor Surgery – Patient Information

## Dermatology Medicine Group

**This leaflet has been designed to give you important information about your condition / procedure, and to answer some common queries that you may have.**



# Information for patients and visitors

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## Introduction

This leaflet is intended to provide you with information regarding your minor surgery within the dermatology department at either Scunthorpe General Hospital, Goole District Hospital or Diana Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby. The aim is to answer any questions that you or your carers may have following discussion with the doctor at your recent dermatology clinic visit.

## Why have you been given an appointment for Minor Surgery?

Your doctor has referred you for a small operation (minor surgery) as we either need to completely remove a lesion from your skin, called an excision or take a sample of a lesion, called a biopsy.

We may also take a sample of skin to make a specific diagnosis a rash or to diagnose other skin conditions when it is not possible to do this by visually examining the skin.

## The Operation

The operation will be done under a local anaesthetic. This means you will be given a small injection under and around the skin of the lesion being removed or the area being operated on. Although you will be awake the initial injection will be uncomfortable and feel similar to a bee sting. This feeling will only last for a few seconds before the skin starts to become numb.

If you have reacted abnormally to an injection for local anaesthetic before it is most important to inform the doctor. Most people will previously have been given local anaesthetic at the dentist to have a tooth removed.

It is also helpful to let us know if you are taking aspirin or warfarin tablets as we may

need to inform you to stop them for a few days. You must however not stop taking the medication without the advice of a doctor. There is an alternative to aspirin tablets called Clopidogrel or Plavix or Rivoxiban or Apixiban. It would also be helpful to know if you are taking these tablets.

The operation will usually take about 30 minutes although it may be longer if more complicated. You may have to lie flat and will need to lie still for the duration of the procedure. You should have a good breakfast or lunch before and not skip meals.

## What to expect after the operation?

Most surgery requires stitches to close the wound and to stop the bleeding. Depending on the procedure you may not have stitches or they may be dissolving ones. The doctor will explain which type you have in the wound. If you stitches are not the dissolving type then they will need to be removed. This can be done by the nurse at your own surgery and you will be given instructions on what to do.

You may also have a dressing covering your wound. Instructions of what to do will also be given to you after the procedure. We will also give you some information on wound care including what to do if bleeding occurs.

The surgery will leave a scar. If you wish for more information regarding your scar this can be discussed further with a member of staff.

Once the local anaesthetic wears off you may feel a little sore. The pain should respond well to regular paracetamol tablets.

You should take it easy after your operation and for the rest of the day however if you feel fine there is no reason why you cannot return to work.

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## Benefits

The benefits of having minor surgery may be for several reasons:

- Having a lesion completely removed is usually done because there is a suspicion that it may be a skin cancer and removing it is important and maybe the only treatment required
- Having a biopsy of a lesion is usually to help provide a diagnosis to decide on the most appropriate treatment after the result

## Risks

### Common / likely risks

Following any surgery to the skin there will be a scar. If the surgery is to the upper back, shoulder or chest area there is more likelihood that the scar may be raised (prominent) and thickened. This is called a keloid scar. It is impossible to predict if this will occur.

There may be some loss of sensation to the area of skin. This is more likely if your operation has been more complicated involving a graft. Normal sensation can take many months to return and occasionally reduced sensation may be permanent.

There may be some bleeding and bruising after the surgery particularly if you take aspirin or warfarin tablets or the surgery is around the eyes or nose. The bleeding should settle you will be given instruction on this after the operation. Bruising will also settle but may take many days to resolve.

Occasionally the wound may become infected. You will be given instructions on the signs and symptoms of this. Usually this requires a topical or sometimes oral antibiotic.

## Rarer risks

There is a rare risk of nerve injury leading to loss of motor nerve function such as eyebrow / eyelid and shoulder drop when surgery is deeper

## Alternatives

There may not be any suitable alternative to having surgery. If you have any concerns and wish to consider your options it would be wise to contact your own GP or a member of the dermatology staff before cancelling your appointment.

## References

Wound complications following diagnostic skin biopsies in dermatology patients. S Wotie, C M Lowence. Archives of Dermatology 2007 143:10 1267-1271.

Dressing the part. Cho CY, Lo JS. Dermatologic Clinics Jan 1998 16:1 25-27.

Post-surgical wound management. Arpey CJ, Whitaker DC. Dermatologic Clinics Oct 2001 19:4 787-797.

## Contact Details for Further Information

If you would like any further information or wish to discuss any details of your care further please contact:

### Dermatology Department:

**Scunthorpe General Hospital**  
01724 290182

**Goole District Hospital**  
01405 720720 extension 4036

**Cromwell Primary Care Centre**  
01472 255693 / 255629

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## Concerns and Queries

If you have any concerns / queries about any of the services offered by the Trust, in the first instance, please speak to the person providing your care.

### For Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital

Alternatively you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (01472) 875403 or at the PALS office which is situated near the main entrance.

### For Scunthorpe General Hospital

Alternatively you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (01724) 290132 or at the PALS office which is situated on C Floor.

Alternatively you can email:

[nlq-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:nlq-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

## Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust

**Diana Princess of Wales Hospital**  
Scartho Road  
Grimsby  
DN33 2BA  
01472 874111

**Scunthorpe General Hospital**  
Cliff Gardens  
Scunthorpe  
DN15 7BH  
01724 282282

**Goole & District Hospital**  
Woodland Avenue  
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