

Staffordshire Skin Surgery

Guide to the removal of moles, cysts, skin tags and other benign skin lesions.

What to bring to your Appointment

Please remember to bring a list of all your medications with you to the consultation, including any that may make you more likely to bleed, such as:

- Aspirin
- Clopidogrel
- Warfarin
- Dabigatran
- Rivaroxaban
- Apixaban

Sometimes surgery will have to be arranged for a second visit if you are taking one of these medications because of the risk of bleeding.

Consultation

Your appointment will take about 45 minutes. This includes a consultation with Dr Anne Ward, Consultant Dermatologist, followed by skin surgery performed by Mr Philip Brackley, Consultant Plastic Surgeon.

During the consultation, you will be asked questions about the skin lesion. These may include how long it has been there, whether it has changed in size, shape or colour and details about how it affects daily life. We need to know about your general health, past medical history and any medication that you are taking. Please let us know if you have ever had a surgical procedure before and how you reacted to it.

The skin lesion will be examined, and you will be advised what the diagnosis is, and what type of procedure can be done to help you. This includes a discussion about the risk of scarring or if the skin lesion may recur after the treatment. You will be advised on what measures to take to help prevent a skin infection after the surgery.

Consent

After the examination and discussion, you will be asked to sign a consent form before the surgical procedure. If you are still unclear about anything, please ask questions so that you understand the nature and purpose of the operation.

You should only sign the consent form when you are sure that you understand what the procedure involves and that you would like to proceed with the treatment.

Surgical Procedure

Before the surgical procedure, you will be given a local anaesthetic injection, so you will be awake during the procedure. There are several techniques to remove a skin lesion, including "Shave Removal" where the skin lesion is sliced off level to the skin, following which the surface is gently cauterised to stop any bleeding points. Other lesions may need "Excision" where the skin is cut and stitches are used to close the area.

In accordance with nationally recognised guidelines some skin lesions will be sent to a histopathology laboratory to be checked and you will be informed of the results.

After Surgery – What to Expect

The scar will remain pink for about 6 weeks after surgery, then slowly become paler. Most scars fade with time and most are hardly noticeable. Some scars may dip in, or rarely a scar may become darkened or raised and lumpy. The degree of scarring depends on your age, the type of skin lesion, where the lesion is and whether there is any infection.

Sometimes, the skin lesion may recur after surgical treatment. This can happen after the removal of any skin lesion, but is more likely to happen with cysts, lipomas and some shave removals.

There is a very low risk of skin infection after this type of surgery, but you will be given advice on keeping the wound covered and clean after the procedure.

After your procedure, you will be given an Information Leaflet about post-operative wound care which will explain what you should do to help the area to heal well. The Leaflet includes Contact Telephone Numbers should you have any concerns.