Care of your wound after a shave excision or curettage

Information for Patients, Relatives and carers

Department of Dermatology
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Macclesfield District General Hospital

www.eastcheshire.nhs.uk
Care of your wound after a shave or excision or curettage.

A shave excision or curettage is a quick and easy procedure which will help to ensure that you will have the correct diagnosis for your condition.

The procedures are undertaken by either removing a skin lesion or problem by slicing or shaving it off with a blade or by scraping it off (curettage).

Bleeding is stopped by cauterising the wound using a hot point or by using a chemical called Driclor. There are no stitches.

A scab forms on the wound and may take between 10 days to 3 weeks to heal. During this time, do not be tempted to pick the scab as this may cause a delay healing or infection.

When the scab lifts naturally, the skin underneath may look pink for several months. Eventually normal skin colour should return, although it may remain paler than the surrounding skin.

Care of the wound

Try to keep the wound dry for 24 – 48 hours. Wear a waterproof dressing if showering. Do not immerse the wound under water, such as in a bath or by swimming during the first two days after the procedure.

The wound may be left uncovered unless advised otherwise. However, if clothing rubs the wound then it may be covered with a breathable dry plaster.

You can wash the wound normally after 2 days. Please take care when drying the area. Pat it dry rather than rubbing.

As with any procedure there are always potential side effects or complications.

Immediate side effects

Pain - the wound site may feel uncomfortable for a day or two afterwards. If it is painful you may take painkillers, such as paracetamol.

Bleeding – if there is any bleeding through the dressing in the first few hours after the procedure, do not remove the dressing. Press on the wound firmly with another dressing for 15 – 20 minutes until the bleeding stops.

If the wound is uncovered apply a light dressing and pressure as above.
Later side effects

**Infection** - there is a small risk of infection. If the wound becomes very inflamed (red) and sore or begins to weep you may require antibiotics. Please contact your GP or practice nurse, if you are worried about this.

**Scarring** - after your biopsy today you will have a small scar which, although permanent, can be minimised if you follow the directions given in this leaflet.

**Nerve damage** – this is very unlikely. This only lasts a short time and normal feeling will return within a couple of months.

Useful contact numbers and for further information:

- British Association of Dermatologists
  [www.bad.org.uk](http://www.bad.org.uk)

- New Zealand Dermatological Society
  [www.dermnetnz.org](http://www.dermnetnz.org)

Any Questions?

If you are worried about something or don’t understand anything you have been told, the specialist nurse is there to help. She is available from 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday & can be contacted on 01625 663016
Comments, compliments or complaints
We welcome any suggestions you have about the quality of our care and our services. Contact us: Freephone: 0800 1613997
Phone: 01625 661449
Textphone: 01625 663723
Customer Care, Reception, Macclesfield District General Hospital, Victoria Road, SK10 3BL
For large print, audio, Braille version or translation, contact Communications and Engagement on 0800 195 4194.

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For advice on stopping smoking please contact our Stop Smoking Service on 0800 085 8818.

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