What is Mohs Surgery?

If your doctor has recommended Mohs micrographic surgery as treatment for skin cancer, it is because this state-of-the-art procedure offers the highest cure rate and reduces scarring disfigurement. The most common skin cancers treated by Mohs surgery are basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma, however, several other less common skin cancers are also treated with this method.

Mohs surgery cure rates are 99% for treatment of basal cell carcinoma and 97% for squamous cell carcinoma—the highest of all cure rates for skin cancer.

Map and Directions to our Gig Harbor Clinic

I-5 North or South: Take exit 132 to merge onto WA-16 W toward Gig Harbor / Bremerton, drive 8.5 miles. Take the Olympic Dr NW exit and go 0.3 miles, then turn left at Olympic Dr NW. Turn left onto Point Fosdick Dr. NW. Look to the right for the 4700 Point Fosdick Medical Building with the Peninsula Dermatology sign, and a large parking lot in front of building. Suite 219 is on the second floor at the North end of the building.

Hwy 16: Head southeast on WA-16 E. Take the Olympic Dr NW exit and go 0.3 miles, then turn right at Olympic Dr NW. Turn left onto Point Fosdick Dr. NW. Look to the right for the 4700 Point Fosdick Medical Building with the Peninsula Dermatology sign, and a large parking lot in front of building. Suite 219 is on the second floor at the North end of the building.

MOHS Micrographic Surgery

Important information regarding the treatment of skin cancer
Questions?

If you have further questions about the Mohs procedure you may contact Peninsula Dermatology and Laser Center at (253) 851-7733. You may also contact the American College of Mohs Micrographic Surgery and Cutaneous Oncology at (800) 500-7224 or info@mohscollege.org.

Kerr Robbins, M.D.

About Dr. Robbins

Kerr Robbins, M.D. is a fellowship-trained Mohs surgeon and the founder of Peninsula Dermatology and Laser Center in Tacoma, Washington. She is a board-certified dermatologist and has completed training in Mohs surgery, dermatologic surgery, and cosmetic surgery. Dr. Robbins is a member of the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery and the American College of Mohs Micrographic Surgery and Cutaneous Oncology. She has contributed to over 40 publications, including two book chapters, and has been asked to present material at several national meetings.

Peninsula Dermatology and Laser Center

3819 Pacific Ave. S.
Tacoma, WA 98405
(253) 851-7733
info@peninsula-derm.com

The Mohs surgery procedure is a multi-stage process that begins with the removal of a skin lesion using a combination of multiple layers of tissue. Each layer is then examined under the microscope to ensure that the lesion has been completely removed. The process is repeated until clear margins are achieved, and the final result is a scarless wound.

Reconstruction

The Mohs surgeon has extensive training in reconstructive surgery and is able to repair even the most complex wounds. Almost all surgical defects are repaired by Dr. Robbins. If the surgery becomes extensive, or involves a sensitive functional area, an appointment with a subspecialty reconstructive surgeon will be arranged for the repair after the tumor is removed. A small wound may be allowed to heal on its own, or the wound may be reconstructed and then covered with a skin graft or a flap. Since Mohs surgery preserves the maximum amount of normal skin, this results in smaller scars.

Medications during and after Surgery

Continued in this section...

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The Mohs operative area may be numb during the procedure. You may experience discomfort on the day of surgery. A patient may be given antibiotics on the day of surgery and for a short period post-operatively. Pain after surgery is generally described by patients as "throbbing" or like a "deep bruise" but is not typically sharp in nature. Surgery on the forehead or scalp may trigger headaches on the first night or first few days of recovery. Please get a good night's rest and eat normal your diet.

The patient reenters the treatment room and additional sections are examined under the microscope immediately after removal of the skin cancer. If your operation is due to be scheduled in the morning, you will meet with Dr. Robbins prior to your surgery appointment, and you may want to arrange for a friend or family member to drive you home after your surgery.

The Surgery

Skin tumors are removed one layer at a time and frozen after they are removed. Using the microscope, the Mohs surgeon examines each layer of tissue under normal-looking skin than what you see with the naked eye. Skin tumors are removed one layer at a time and frozen after they are removed. Using the microscope, the Mohs surgeon examines each layer of tissue under normal-looking skin than what you see with the naked eye.

We provide a quiet, peaceful environment with beverages and snacks available. We allow patients to sit in the waiting room with family or friends. We recommend bringing ample reading material (books, magazines, laptop computer, etc.) while the patient relaxes in the waiting room. The surgery requires 45 minutes to an hour. During this time, the tissue is removed only in the area where the margin is examined. The frozen section tissue processing and microscopic examination of the lesion begins as soon as possible after surgery.

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