



CARE OF YOUR BIOPSY SITE

Kathleen W. Judge, M.D.

Medical Director

*Diplomate American Board of Dermatology
Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery*

Clean the biopsy site twice daily with hydrogen peroxide, then apply antibiotic ointment or aquaphor.

Do this until the area is completely healed.

General Information

You have had an abnormal appearing lesion or growth biopsied. The tissue removed has been sent to the lab for evaluation. It usually takes from seven to ten working days to get the results from the lab and we will contact you as soon as they are received. Any additional treatment needed will be scheduled when you are contacted with the results. **If you have not heard from us within two weeks, please call for your results.** You will receive a separate bill from the pathology lab for their services.

If the results show that no additional treatment is needed, but you feel the biopsy site is not healing correctly, please contact the office. Some types of abnormal scars can be improved with topical or injected medication.

Moles

Normal moles or nevi are benign and need no further treatment. Occasionally benign moles removed for biopsy may recur or may produce pigment again in the area of the biopsy. This is no reason for concern and does not necessarily require additional treatment. The only way to remove some of the deeper types of moles is to cut completely through the skin, remove the area, and close the opening with stitches. This requires a surgical procedure that is not medically necessary for benign moles.

Dysplastic or atypical moles look abnormal to the pathologist and yet are considered benign and not cancerous. This type of mole is thought to be a possible precursor to melanoma. As a result, surgical removal of the base of the biopsy site may be recommended to ensure that all abnormal cells are completely removed.

Melanoma is a type of skin cancer that develops in pigment cells or moles. The treatment of melanoma is determined by the thickness or stage. Early stage melanoma is usually treated with surgical removal. In later stages, other therapy is required.

Actinic Keratoses, Basal Cell Carcinoma, Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Actinic Keratoses are red scaling or crusted non-healing areas on sun-exposed skin. They are considered precancerous because they have the potential to turn into squamous cell carcinoma. Treatment of these lesions is recommended.

Basal Cell Carcinoma is the most common type of skin cancer. It does not typically spread to other areas of the body but can grow and be very destructive locally if left untreated.

Squamous Cell Carcinoma originates from the upper skin cell layers. It has a slight chance of spreading if left untreated.

Other Benign Growths

Seborrheic Keratoses are benign growths that can occur almost anywhere on the body. They are never cancerous and require no further treatment. They may grow back after biopsy.

Dermatofibroma is a type of benign fibrous growth, almost like scar tissue, that occurs after a minor trauma to the skin such as an insect bite, a pimple, or a small scratch. They are common on the arms, legs and trunk and can occasionally be inflamed or discolored. They can recur after biopsy.

Benign Lichenoid Keratosis is a benign growth that can itch or become inflamed. It may require cryosurgical treatment after biopsy to clear it completely.

Acrochorda or skin tags are benign growths that occur in areas of friction on the skin. They may recur after removal.