

Step-by-Step Guide to Your Mohs Surgery: Skin Cancer Removal (Duration: 1–3 Hours)

Insurance: Check with your insurance company so you are prepared for any prior authorization that they may require.

Comfort: Consider bringing reading material, headphones/calming music to wear during the surgery.

Preparation:

Meals: Eat a healthy meal prior to arriving, but avoid caffeine since caffeine affects blood clotting.

Arrival: When you arrive at the clinic, you'll be greeted by our team & checked in. Please bring any required insurance paperwork or prior authorization, along with a list of medications you're currently taking.

Local Anesthesia: Before the procedure begins, the area around the skin cancer will be numbed with a local anesthetic. This ensures you are comfortable during the surgery, much like the local anesthetic used by a dentist.

Removing the First Layer:

Initial Excision: The dermatologist will remove a thin layer of tissue from the visible tumor site. This layer includes the cancerous cells & a small margin of surrounding tissue.

Tissue Mapping: The tissue is carefully mapped, color-coded, & taken to our on-site lab for immediate analysis.

Lab Analysis:

Microscopic Examination: In the lab, the tissue is frozen, processed, & examined under a specialized microscope. The dermatologist checks the tissue to see if any cancer cells remain.

Results: This process can take about an hour. During this time, you can relax in our waiting area.

Additional Layers (if needed) this may take an additional hour or more:

Repeat Excision: If cancer cells are still present at the edges of the tissue, the dermatologist will remove another thin layer.

Further Analysis: Each additional layer is examined until no more cancer cells are found. This step is repeated as needed, with the goal of preserving as much healthy tissue as possible.

Wound Repair:

Final Repair: Once all the cancerous tissue is removed, the dermatologist will discuss the best way to close the wound. Depending on the size & location, the wound may be closed with stitches, left to heal naturally, or require a skin graft or flap.

Post-Procedure Care: You'll receive detailed instructions on how to care for your wound at home, including how to manage any discomfort & when to return for follow-up visits.

Follow-Up:

Healing & Recovery: Most patients heal well after Mohs surgery, with minimal scarring. Our physicians have had excellent results. Most patients heal well with minimal scarring, but please schedule follow-up appointments to monitor recovery and ensure proper healing. Please call the office if you have any concerns. (Our main office locations are 4715 E Camp Lowell or 10042 E Old Vail Rd with Saturday & Tues/Thurs evening appointments available.)

Skin Checks: Regular skin checks are important to catch any new or recurring skin cancer before it spreads.