



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Skin Surgery Pre-operative patient information booklet:

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:
Dermatology Department on 01904 726629

The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE
Tel: 01904 631313

Contents	Page
Types of skin procedure	3
Before my procedure	4
Make sure you have told us if:	4
On the day.....	6
When you arrive	7
During the procedure	8
After the procedure	9
Post surgery Infection what to look out for	10
Tell us what you think of this leaflet.....	11
Teaching, training and research	11
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)	11
Leaflets in alternative languages or formats	12

Types of skin procedure

- **Punch biopsy** – a small circle of skin is taken, and the wound is closed with a stitch or stitches.
- **Curettage and Cautery** – the area of skin is scraped away (with an instrument called a curette) and the bleeding stopped (with cauterisation). No stitches are required. You will have a scab, which will fall off when the skin underneath heals.
- **Shave excision** – the lesion is shaved off along the surface of the skin and the bleeding stopped (with cauterisation). No stitches are required. You will have a scab, which will fall off when the skin underneath heals.
- **Excision** – the whole lesion is removed with a margin of surrounding skin. Stitches are used to close the wound.

Your procedure will be done by either a doctor or a nurse with specialist training in skin surgery. Following your surgery, you will be left with a scar.

Before my procedure

- If you take **warfarin**, please ensure you have your international normalised ratio – INR checked one to three days before the procedure. If the result is above 3 then please contact the dermatology department on 01904 726629.
- Even if your blood tests are usually stable, you must have an extra warfarin check one to three days before the operation.

Make sure you have told us if:

- You have a lasting power of attorney for health and well-being; please ensure the documentation for this is presented at each appointment.
- You need a carer/family member present at your appointment.
- You take blood-thinning medication such as warfarin, rivaroxaban, apixaban, aspirin or clopidogrel. Please continue to take this medication as you normally would.
- You have a bleeding disorder.
- You have an implantable electronic device, such as a pacemaker or defibrillator. We may need to speak to the department that fitted the device.

- You have had problems with a local anaesthetic in the past, for example at the dentist.
- You have any allergies to medications, local anaesthetic, adrenaline, latex or dressings.
- Do you have a strenuous job or play contact sports, e.g. rugby?
- Are you or is it likely you could be pregnant?
- If you have any upcoming holidays, special events or plan to do any heavy lifting up to three weeks after the procedure. Please note you may have stiches which need to be removed after the surgery.

If you are not sure about anything, then please ask.

Contact us on 01904 726629 if there is anything you think we should know.

On the day

- Eat and drink as normal. Do not drink alcohol.
- Take your medications as normal.
- You may wish to have a shower or bath as we will ask you to keep your wound dry for 48 hours.
- If you are having a procedure on your scalp, please do not apply any hair products, such as hair-spray, mousse or gel on the day of the procedure.
- If the procedure is on your finger or toe, please remove any nail varnish.
- Do not wear contact lenses if the procedure is around your eye.
- We advise that you wear loose or comfortable clothing, so your clothes do not rub on the wound.
- Please arrive on time for your procedure, we cannot guarantee the procedure will go ahead if you are late.

When you arrive

- Please check in at the Dermatology reception so we know you have arrived.
- The procedure will take place in a surgical room in the Dermatology department.
- Please let the doctor or nurse know if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- The doctor or nurse will describe the procedure and answer your questions. You will be fully informed of the risk and benefits and have the opportunity to ask questions.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form to say you have understood the information and agree to go ahead with the procedure.

During the procedure

- The surgery usually takes between 30 minutes to one hour depending on the type of procedure.
- The doctor or nurse will use local anaesthetic to numb to area. You may feel some stinging when this first goes in, but this will only last a few seconds.
- You may feel some pressure and movement during the procedure.
- All skin samples removed are sent to the laboratory for testing.
- If you would like the doctor or nurse to stop at any time please ask.

After the procedure

- You will be given an aftercare information booklet which will provide you with information on how to look after your wound site and contact numbers if you experience any problems. The doctor or nurse will discuss this with you before you leave the minor operation room.
- Occasionally, some people feel faint. This soon passes, and you will be asked to stay in the department until you feel well enough to leave.
- You will need to keep the area clean and dry for 48 hours.
- Please be aware that you should not swim, play sport or exercise whilst the stitches are in place. Depending on the size and site of the surgery you may be asked to refrain from activities that will stretch the area for up to four weeks.
- You may need to take paracetamol if you experience any pain. Always follow the instructions on the packet and never take more than the recommended dose. Please avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as, aspirin and ibuprofen as they may increase your risk of bleeding. If you normally take low dose aspirin please continue as normal.
- The doctor who arranged the procedure will inform you and your General Practitioner of the results.

Post surgery Infection what to look out for

Infection, signs include:

- The wound becomes red, swollen, or hot.
- The wound becomes more painful and does not respond to the painkillers you have been taking.
- Unpleasant smell or leakage of fluid from the wound.
- You feel generally unwell or have a temperature.

If you recognise any of these please call the department on 01904 726621 and ask to speak one of the skin surgery nurses.

Please scan the QR code below to view this information online:



Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

Katy Maskell, Sister, Dermatology Department,
The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or
telephone 01904 726629.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

Please telephone or email if you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio.

如果你要求本資 不同的 或 式提供 , 電
或發電

Jeżeli niniejsze informacje potrzebne są w innym języku lub formacie, należy zadzwonić lub wysłać wiadomość e-mail

Bu bilgileri değişik bir lisanda ya da formatta istiyorsanız lütfen telefon ediniz ya da e-posta gönderiniz

Telephone: 01904 725566

Email: yhs-tr.FacilitiesmanagementHelpdesk@nhs.net

Author	Katy Maskell, Dermatology Sister
Date first issued	May 2003
Review Date	September 2026
Version	6 (issued September 2023)
Approved by	Dr Thomson, Consultant Dermatologist
Document Reference	PIL 191 v6

© 2023 York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.
All Rights reserved.