

CURETTAGE AND CAUTERY OR SHAVE EXCISION WOUND ADVICE

Patient Information

Remove your dressing on:.....

Practice nurse information if needed.....

You have received treatment to remove a skin lesion by curettage & cautery or by shaving the surface layers of the skin and cauterising the base to stop the bleeding (cautery). This wound will normally heal in 2-3 weeks

HOW WILL I LOOK AFTER MY WOUND?

The wound following your procedure is similar to a deep graze. If a dressing has been applied to your wound it should be removed after 48 hours. Once the dressing has been removed the wound should be washed gently with water and patted dry each day. Do not pick off any scab as this may increase the risk of scar formation. **Apply Vaseline (new tube/tin) to keep the wound moist.** This should be repeated three to four times daily to help produce the best cosmetic result. It is safe to apply make up once the wound has healed.

- **WILL IT BE PAINFUL?**

Once the local anaesthetic has worn off you may find that there is a mild discomfort. This is usually relieved by taking paracetamol. If you are taking any medication that contains paracetamol please do not take any additional paracetamol. Avoid taking Aspirin as this can increase the risk of bleeding unless this has been prescribed by your GP.

- **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF THE WOUND BLEEDS?**

It is normal to expect some oozing of blood from the wound. *If bleeding occurs, apply constant pressure for 20 minutes.* It should eventually stop using a clean handkerchief or tea towel.

- **HOW WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE AN INFECTION IN MY WOUND?**

Open wounds produced by this procedure may develop a yellow base, which is the natural healing process. Infection can complicate any operation and usually appears 2-7 days after the procedure. If you notice increasing pain, redness and swelling or you feel generally unwell please see your GP as soon as possible, as you may need a prescription for some antibiotics.

- **WILL I HAVE A SCAR?**

The vast majority of patients (>85%) will be satisfied by the cosmetic result after a shave excision. Some maybe disappointed and it is important to be aware that surgery may produce a scar that is worse than the original skin lesion. A number of problems can occur including loss of colour in the skin (hypopigmentation), dark, re-pigmentation at the base of the wound, a depressed scar, and a raised scar (keloid). Occasionally, the skin lesion may regrow after several months or even years after treatment.

- **If you are not returning for a follow up appointment:-**

All skin surgery samples are routinely sent for laboratory analysis (histopathology). You will receive a letter with your skin biopsy results, copied to your GP. It takes on average 4-5 weeks for the results to be processed. It is important that you know your test results, so please do not assume everything is fine if you have not heard from us. If you have not heard from us with your test results **6 weeks** after your procedure, please telephone 01273 665019 to let us know and we will chase it up for you.