Royal Devon
University Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Exeter Skin Cancer Service

Wide local excision

(Eastern services)

Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

The aim of this surgery is to remove an area of healthy tissue from around the site of the melanoma and minimise the risk of the cancer returning to that area. You will already have a scar from where you had your melanoma removed and as we need to take away more skin you will end up with a slightly longer scar. In some cases, there will not be enough skin to close the wound directly in which case you may need to have a skin graft, but your surgeon will discuss this with you beforehand. See additional leaflet on 'skin grafts'.

The wound itself will be closed with stitches and tape applied over the top to reinforce the wound. The stitches are usually dissoluble (except on the face); if they are removable, you will be told before discharge.

Possible post-operative problems

Pain

You may experience some mild discomfort following surgery. This should be easily controlled with mild painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen if you are able to tolerate these.

Bruising and haematoma

You may experience some bruising. This will gradually disappear, but occasionally blood collects within the tissues surrounding the wound causing swelling, discomfort and hardness; this is called a haematoma. Although the blood will eventually be reabsorbed by the body, this can take a few weeks. If the haematoma causes you a lot of discomfort, you should contact your GP or the Wound Assessment Clinic on 01392 406185.

Infection

If your wound becomes red, inflamed, more painful or begins to ooze, you may need a course of antibiotics so you will need to contact your GP or the Wound Assessment Clinic on 01392 406185.

Movement

Depending on where your wound is, you may need to be careful when moving/lifting but you will be told this before you leave hospital.

Follow up appointment

You will need to have a wound check one week following your surgery. This is to check that there are no problems and that your wound is healing well. This can be done at your GP surgery by the practice nurse (you will need to make an appointment).

An appointment will also be made for you to come back to the hospital Outpatient Department for the results of your surgery. Any further treatment, if required, will be discussed with you then.

Your notes

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

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- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

You can also share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at www.careopinion.org.uk or freephone 0800 122 3135.

Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

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www.royaldevon.nhs.uk

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www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/get-in-touch