

## YOUR MOHS MICROGRAPHIC SURGERY

### About Your Surgeon

Dr. Wayne A. Fagan is a Board Certified Dermatologist who graduated from medical school in 1992 as a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. He is also a Fellow in the American Society of the Mohs Surgery having attained that position in March of 1997 and has been performing Mohs Micrographic Surgery in Corpus Christi since July of 1996 when he completed his residency in Dermatology in San Antonio, Texas.

### About Your Surgery

Mohs Micrographic Surgery is an excellent tissue preserving treatment performed on skin cancers that involve large areas and cosmetically sensitive areas on the face, such as the nose and around the eyes and ears. In general, your surgery will take from one to four hours, and you are welcome to bring a family member or friend to keep you company during this time. We hope that your experience with us will be as problem-free as possible.

Enclosed are some brochures that will help you understand skin cancers and the Mohs procedure, as well as an appointment card with the date and time of your Mohs Micrographic Surgery. Please feel free to call our office if you have any questions.

We would like you to read literature enclosed. We will see you soon!

Sincerely,

*Wayne A. Fagan, M.D.*

# Mohs Micrographic Surgery Patient Information

## **What is Mohs Surgery?**

Mohs surgery is a specialized, highly effective technique for removing skin cancers. It was developed by Dr. Frederic Mohs at the University of Wisconsin in the 1930's and is now practiced throughout the world. It differs from other skin cancer treatments in that it permits the immediate and complete microscopic examination of the removed cancer tissue so that all the roots and extensions of the cancer can be found and eliminated. Mohs surgery has the highest reported cure rate of all treatments of skin cancer.

It is not necessary to treat all skin cancers with Mohs surgery. Mohs surgery is reserved for skin cancers that have recurred (grown back again after previous treatment), or at a high risk for recurring or which are located in cosmetic areas where preservation of the maximum amount of normal skin is important.

Mohs surgery is practiced only by those who have advanced training, surgical and laboratory facilities and staff to perform this specialized technique. Dr. Fagan is a member of the American Society for Mohs Surgery.

## **Why remove skin cancers with Mohs surgery?**

Some skin cancers are deceptively large, being far bigger under the skin than they appear to be from the surface. These cancers may send out roots in the skin or along blood vessels, nerves or cartilage. Also, skin cancers that have grown back again after previous treatments may send out extensions deep under the scar tissue that has formed. Mohs surgery is specifically designed to remove these cancers by tracking down and removing these cancerous roots.

## **How is Mohs surgery performed?**

There are three steps involved in Mohs surgery:

- 1) The skin is first made completely numb using a local anesthetic. The visible cancer is removed along with a thin layer of additional tissue. A detailed diagram (called a Mohs map) of the removed specimen is drawn. This takes only a few minutes and the patient may then return to the waiting room.
- 2) The specimen is then carefully divided and color coded to distinguish top from bottom and left from right. A technician then freezes the tissue and removes very thin slices of the entire edge and undersurface. These slices are placed on microscopic slides and stained for examination under the microscope. This is the most consuming part of the procedure, often requiring an hour or more to complete.
- 3) Dr. Fagan then carefully examines these slides under the microscope. This allows him to examine the entire surgical margin of the removed tissue. In other words, the entire undersurface and the complete edge of the specimen are examined. All microscopic roots of the cancer can thus be precisely identified and pinpointed on the Mohs map.

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If more cancer has been found on the microscopic slides, Dr. Fagan uses the Mohs map to remove additional tissue only where cancer is present. This is what allows the Mohs surgery technique to leave the smallest possible surgical defect, because there is no guess work involved in deciding where to remove additional tissue. Only tissue around the roots and extensions of cancer is removed.

### **How long does it take?**

Most cases can be completed in three or less stages, requiring less than four hours. However, no one can predict in advance how extensive a given cancer will be, because the size of a skin cancer's roots cannot be estimated in advance. We therefore ask that you reserve 4-5 hours for surgery, in case additional surgical sessions are required.

### **Will it leave a scar?**

Yes. Any form of surgery leaves a scar. Mohs surgery, however, will leave one of the smallest possible surgical defects, and therefore a smaller final scar.

### **What happens after the Mohs surgery is completed?**

When the cancer is removed, Dr. Fagan will discuss with you your options. These may involve: 1) allowing the wound to heal naturally, without additional surgery, which often produces the best cosmetic result, 2) having him repair the wound, 3) having your referring doctor repair the wound or make arrangements for its repair, or 4) referring you to another surgeon for wound closure.

### **Will I have pain, bruising or swelling after surgery?**

Most patients do not complain of significant pain. If there is any discomfort, Tylenol is usually all that is necessary for relief. However, be assured that stronger pain medications will be prescribed when needed. You may have some bruising and swelling around the wound, especially if surgery is being done close to the eyes.

### **Will my insurance cover the cost?**

Most insurance policies cover the cost of both Mohs surgery and the surgical reconstruction of the wound. Please check with your insurance carrier for exact information relating to your surgery. Dr. Fagan accepts Medicare assignment for cancer surgery.

### **How do I prepare myself for surgery?**

Get a good night's rest and eat normally the day of surgery. If you are taking prescription medications, continue to take them unless otherwise directed. However, avoid taking any medications containing aspirin for ten (10) days prior to your surgery. Also, please do not take any aspirin substitutes, such as Advil, Motrin, Nalfon, Naprosyn, etc. within 24 hours of surgery. You may, however, take Tylenol at any time prior to surgery. You may want to bring a book or magazine with you to occupy your time while waiting for your slides to be processed and examined. Also, Dr. Fagan recommends that you arrange for someone to drive you home after surgery is completed.

## IMPORTANT:

We have experienced a high increase in the number of NO SHOWS for Mohs Surgery's, due to this we have now implemented a **NEW POLICY**.

We will call TWO days in advance to confirm your appointment. ALL appointments must be confirmed by 2PM the day **PRIOR** to the surgery date. If your appointment should fall on a Monday, you will have till 2PM on Friday to confirm your visit.

your surgery WILL BE CANCELLED if **NOT** confirmed by 2PM the day before.

This policy is to ensure we are able to get all patients in a timely manner treated. We do have a long list of patients wanting to be treated sooner.

NOTE: If you do **confirm** your appointment and fail to show up, you will be charged a **NO SHOW** fee of **\$100**

South Texas Dermatology appreciates your cooperation and business.

### Preoperative Instructions before your Surgery:

The use of Hibiclens is not mandatory, however, when used prior to Surgery it helps reduce the risk of skin infection. We feel this is very beneficial and safe. Please use at your own discretion. Avoid contact with eyes, mouth and inner ear.

Please begin to wash 2 days prior to surgery from head to toe including surgical site with an over the counter antimicrobial skin cleanser such as: Hibiclens (chlorhexidine Gluconate 4%). Available at most pharmacies and a generic brand should be available – **No prescriptions required.**

