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SKIN & CANCER FOUNDATION

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AUSTRALIA

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# Day Surgery Guide

[skinhospital.edu.au](http://skinhospital.edu.au)



## WELCOME

This booklet provides essential information to help you prepare for your day surgery.

Our expert dermatologists and nurses are committed to delivering high-quality, personalised care in a safe and supportive environment.

If you have any questions, please speak with your doctor or a member of our team.

We encourage you to review the following pages to understand what to expect before, during, and after your procedure.

## ABOUT YOUR PROCEDURE

At The Skin Hospital, we offer a range of procedures, which are tailored to your needs, including general excisions, Mohs micrographic, plastic reconstructive, oculoplastic, and cosmetic. Your doctor will discuss the most suitable option for your condition and advise you on the expected duration during your consultation. Please see information on the most common procedures we perform in the sections below.

The Skin Hospital uses a secure clinical photography system that allows staff to take photos using mobile devices. These images are uploaded directly to your medical record and are never stored on the mobile device. If you do not wish for these photos to be taken via a mobile device, please inform a member of our staff.

### Excision of Skin Cancer

Excision of skin cancer is a minor procedure used to remove cancerous skin lesions, such as basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, or melanoma. The area of concern is cut out along with a small margin of healthy skin to ensure all cancerous cells are removed. This is typically performed under local anaesthesia and may be completed as a day procedure.

#### Benefits:

- Complete removal of the cancerous lesion
- Reduced risk of cancer recurrence in the treated area
- Provides tissue for further analysis (pathology) to confirm complete excision
- Can help prevent the cancer from spreading

#### Risks:

- Scarring at the site of excision
- Infection or bleeding at the wound site
- Pain, swelling or bruising post-surgery
- In rare cases, incomplete removal may require further treatment
- Temporary or permanent changes in skin sensation

## Mohs Micrographic Procedure

Mohs micrographic procedure is a precise technique used to treat skin cancers such as basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC). It offers high cure rates while preserving as much healthy tissue as possible.

### The Mohs Procedure Involves:

#### 1. Removal

The tumour and a small margin of surrounding tissue are removed under local anaesthetic.

#### 2. Microscopic Analysis

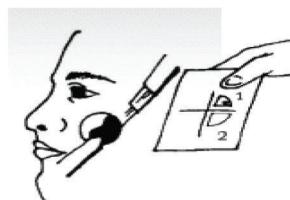
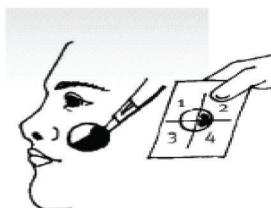
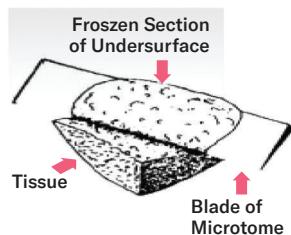
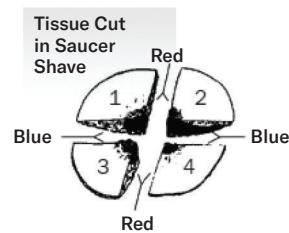
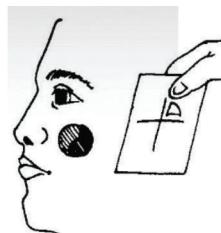
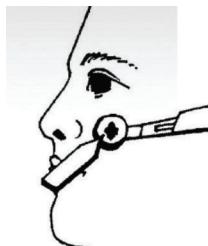
The tissue is mapped, sectioned, and examined under a microscope to check for cancer cells.

#### 3. Stage-by-Stage Removal

If cancer is found at the edges, more tissue is removed and re-examined until the area is clear.

#### 4. Reconstruction

Once margins are clear, the wound is repaired, often with stitches or minor reconstructive techniques.



Every layer of tissue removed is inspected under the microscope for evidence of cancer cells. As long as cancer cells remain anywhere within the specimen, the surgeon continues to remove and examine layers of tissue until no cancer cells are present.

### Benefits:

- Complete cancer removal
- Minimal impact on healthy skin
- Excellent cosmetic results
- High success rates

### Risks and Complications:

As with any procedure, Mohs carries some risks:

- Bruising and swelling, especially near the eyes or nose
- Bleeding or infection
- Temporary or rare permanent numbness, especially if nerves are involved
- Scarring or changes to skin texture

Most side effects improve with time, but a scar is inevitable after the procedure.

### Aftercare post-procedure:

You will be given instructions on how to care for your wound at home. Follow-up appointments may be needed to monitor healing and discuss pathology results.



For more information on a Mohs procedure and what it is, please watch this video.

### Fees

A member of our day surgery booking team will be in contact with you 2-3 weeks prior to your admission to confirm your fees and the process to claim from your private health fund.

Day surgery patients may receive two accounts; the day surgery facility fee and doctors account - both will be generated by The Skin Hospital and are payable on admission. EFTPOS, credit cards (except Diners and American Express) and BPAY are acceptable forms of payment. Please note that The Skin Hospital does not accept cash payments.

If you are having a procedure other than Mohs procedure and a specimen is sent to pathology, a separate account will be sent from the Pathology Department.

## DAY SURGERY PREPARATION CHECKLIST

### Before Your Surgery

- Attend your pre-surgery consultation – your doctor will explain:
  - The procedure
  - Fees
  - Expected outcomes
  - Provide the required paperwork
- Stop vitamins and supplements (e.g. fish oil, vitamin E, garlic, ginkgo) 2 weeks prior to reduce bleeding risk.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Have a substantial breakfast, unless you are having a sedation or general anaesthetic. In this case, fast from the time which is advised by the Pre-Admission Nurse.
- Shower and wash your hair on the morning of surgery using an antiseptic wash.
- At least five days before surgery, please complete and return all forms to either the postal address provided by your doctor or the Darlinghurst or Westmead email address.  
The email address for Darlinghurst is [DSurgery@skinhospital.edu.au](mailto:DSurgery@skinhospital.edu.au) and for Westmead, it is [bookings@skinhospital.edu.au](mailto:bookings@skinhospital.edu.au).  
Alternatively, please call 02 8833 3000 for further assistance.

### On the Day of Surgery

- Do NOT wear:
  - Make-up
  - Hairspray
  - Body lotion
  - Perfume
  - Jewellery or valuables
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing such as:
  - Tracksuit or pants
  - Cardigan
  - Short-sleeved shirt or blouse
- Continue prescription medications unless told otherwise by your doctor.

- Bring:
  - A book or magazine
  - Mobile phone or iPad, charger
  - Eyeglasses/contact lens case (you cannot wear lenses during the procedure)
  - Dentures and hearing aids, with containers
  - Any mobility aids, such as walking sticks or frames
  - Valid identification and Medicare card
  - List of current medications
  - Comfortable clothing
- Any required payment or health fund details

- Unless you are having a simple excision, please arrange the following:
  - Someone must accompany you home by car or taxi
  - No public transport or driving yourself
  - A responsible adult should stay with you overnight
  - If going home alone, you must sign a release form

## Things to Note

### Mobile Phones

- Not permitted in the operating theatre.
- May be used in the recovery area.

### Privacy

- We comply with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), Australian Privacy Principles, and Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2022 (NSW).
- For details, visit: [skinhospital.edu.au/privacy-policy](http://skinhospital.edu.au/privacy-policy) or email: [info@skinhospital.edu.au](mailto:info@skinhospital.edu.au)

### Interpreter Service

- If an interpreter is required, please contact us before your admission.
- Additional fees may apply and will be discussed during your pre-admission call.

### Smoke-Free Policy

- The Skin Hospital is a smoke-free environment, including the use of vapes, in line with NSW Health regulations.

## Parking Information

### Darlinghurst

- No on-site parking.
- 5-minute drop-off zone available at the front of the hospital.
- Paid parking at Wilson Car Park (70 Riley St).
- Do not drive post-surgery – arrange private transport or taxi.

### Westmead

- Limited parking in the car park on Ashley Lane.
- Additional time-limited parking available on nearby streets and in Parramatta Park.

# AFTER YOUR SURGERY

## Managing Common Side Effects

### Activity and Recovery

- Rest for at least one week post-surgery.
- Avoid:
  - Strenuous activity or sports until stitches are removed and you've rested for an additional week.
  - Travel immediately after surgery.

### Bleeding

- If bleeding occurs:
  - Leave the dressing in place.
  - Apply firm pressure with clean gauze for 20 minutes.
  - Sit semi-upright with pillows to support your head.

### Infections

- Watch for signs: redness, pain, or discharge from the wound.
- If any appear within 28 days of surgery, contact The Skin Hospital immediately.

### Pain

- Use Panadol or Panadeine as directed.
- Avoid aspirin or Disprin as they may increase bleeding risk.

### Swelling and Bruising

- Common around the eyes and nose.
- To reduce:
  - Keep your head elevated for 48 hours.
  - Use an ice pack for 10 minutes every hour during the first 24 hours.

### Scarring and Healing

- Scarring is normal and typically improves over 3–6 months.
- Healing may take longer for flaps or grafts.
- Larger scars may form if the cancer was extensive.

### Follow-Up

- Attend all scheduled appointments for stitch removal and to monitor healing.
- Contact your doctor if you experience increased redness, swelling, pain, or discharge.

## Important Information

### Hygiene

Good hygiene helps reduce the risk of infection:

- Wash your hands regularly.
- Wipe down frequently touched surfaces.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Dispose of used tissues immediately and wash your hands again.

### Preventing Falls

After surgery, you may be more prone to falling. Follow this advice to stay safe:

- Stand up slowly after sitting or lying down.
- Wear flat, well-fitted shoes with good grip.
- Use handrails when available.
- Keep floors clear of clothing, bags, and other trip hazards.
- Know your limits and ask for assistance if needed.
- Bring any walking aids with you.
- Leave a night light on to assist with getting out of bed.
- Wear your glasses as usual.

Speak to your nurse or doctor about your fall risk and follow their instructions.

### Preventing Pressure Injuries

To protect your skin and reduce the risk of pressure injuries:

- Check your skin daily for redness or

broken areas.

- Change positions regularly.
- Avoid sitting or lying directly on hard plastic surfaces.
- Protect bony areas (e.g. hips, shoulders) with cushions.
- Avoid overheating and keep skin dry.
- Use barrier creams or oils on dry or flaky skin.
- Bathe with warm (not hot) water and mild soap.
- Maintain a balanced diet with enough protein, calories, and fluids.

### Antibiotic Use

The Skin Hospital follows national guidelines to prevent unnecessary use of antibiotics:

- Routine antibiotics are not given before or after most surgeries.
- If your condition requires antibiotics, they will be prescribed based on your specific health needs.

### Recovering at Home

Once you return home:

- Rest for 12–24 hours.
- Do not drive or operate any machinery for 24 hours after surgery.
- Avoid tasks that require full alertness or coordination.
- You'll receive a post-operative SMS for follow-up.
- If you have any concerns, please contact The Skin Hospital.

## Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

At The Skin Hospital, we are committed to upholding the principles outlined in the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights. This charter ensures that every patient receives safe, high-quality care that is respectful and responsive to individual needs. It outlines your rights to:

- Access healthcare
- Safety in care and treatment
- Respect for your culture, beliefs and dignity
- Partnership in decision-making
- Information you can understand
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Give feedback about your care

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For more information, visit [www.safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights)

## Compliments & Complaints

You can provide feedback through a variety of channels:

- In person by approaching any of our team members during your visit
- Completing the patient experience survey we send via SMS link following your appointment or procedure
- Submitting electronic feedback via our IPADs located in key areas throughout the hospital
- Sending an email to [feedback@skinhospital.edu.au](mailto:feedback@skinhospital.edu.au)
- If you have any concerns about your care, please address them while at the day surgery
- If you feel that the matter requires independent review, please write to:

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The Commissioner  
Health Care Complaints Commission,  
Locked Mail Bag 18, Strawberry Hills NSW 2021

## Education and Research

The Skin Hospital is dedicated to advancing dermatology through education and research. We support a wide range of initiatives, including clinical trials, in-house studies, and collaborative projects, all aimed at improving outcomes for patients with skin conditions and skin cancer.

### Your support helps fund:

- Research into skin diseases and treatments
- Education programs for the public and healthcare professionals
- Essential medical equipment and training for future dermatologists

### Ways to Give

One-off  
donations

Regular  
giving

Workplace  
giving

Bequests

**Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference.**

To donate, visit



or speak to a staff member for other options.



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### **Contact Information**

For any questions or concerns, please contact:

**Westmead**  
7 Ashley Lane,  
Westmead NSW 2145  
+61 2 8833 3000

**Darlinghurst**  
121 Crown Street,  
Darlinghurst NSW 2010  
+61 2 8651 2000

**Email** [info@skinhospital.edu.au](mailto:info@skinhospital.edu.au)

[skinhospital.edu.au](http://skinhospital.edu.au)