



SKIN INSTITUTE

Punch Biopsy Information Sheet

Punch Biopsies are performed to help with the diagnosis of skin conditions. Sometimes different skin conditions can look similar, so additional information is required. A small sample of tissue is taken and sent to a Pathology Laboratory for analysis. Usually 1 - 2 sutures are required to close the biopsy area. These are removed 7 days later and you will receive the biopsy results, and be advised of the next step.

Why do I need a biopsy?

A biopsy may be required to distinguish between different types of rashes or skin lesions. Your Doctor may be considering a number of possible diagnoses, and the skin biopsy provides additional information in this process.

A biopsy may be required if your Doctor suspects you have a skin cancer. It is taken to confirm that the skin cancer is present. The biopsy also gives information on the type of skin cancer, to help determine the best course of treatment.

The Biopsy Procedure

A Nurse or Doctor perform will your biopsy. Local anaesthetic will be administered to make the area numb. This usually stings momentarily but the skin quickly becomes numb. You may feel a pushing sensation in the area where the skin biopsy is being performed but there should not be any pain. Usually 1-2 stitches will be required to close the biopsy site or if the wound is small, it may heal adequately without a stitch.

Tape or a small dressing is usually applied to the site. This should be left in place for approximately 24 hours. You can shower and perform your usual daily activities as normal.

There may be a small scar left after the biopsy site has healed.

A follow up appointment with the Practice Nurse will be arranged for you 7 days later to have your stitches removed and to obtain the biopsy results. In some cases, depending on the results, you will also be seen by the Doctor at this time.

A fee will be incurred for having a punch biopsy. This is in addition to the consultation fee (please ask at reception for the cost of a punch biopsy).

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