



Removal of Benign Moles and Growths

Can this be done on the NHS?

As local GP's, we see many patients who would like the removal of an ugly blemish or mole. Unfortunately, this is not a service that is available on the NHS as for most patients this is considered cosmetic minor surgery. Only moles that have suspicious features or are likely to become cancerous are removed under the NHS. If you have any concerns regarding your moles then it's important to have this checked, particularly if you have noticed any changes in shape, size or colour.

Is it safe to remove moles?

Ensure that you are seen by a doctor experienced in dermatology with specialist training in skin surgery. Suspicious moles need to be regularly monitored or removed entirely if recommended by your doctor. Most moles can be shaved off or formally excised (cut out and stitched). This can be done here at the clinic.

What can I expect before I have an operation?

You will first need to be seen for a pre-op appointment. During this appointment we will examine the mole/growth to find out exactly what it is and to check that it's harmless; explain the best and safest removal method and any potential side-effects. Providing that you are happy to then go ahead, we'll get you booked in as soon as possible.

How long will the procedure take?

Depending on the size and complexity, the procedure will take between 30 and 60 minutes. You will be given an aftercare pack with written advice on wound care and any dressings you may need. If you have any questions following your procedure you can phone or email the clinic for advice. We recommend attending a post-op appointment 4-6 weeks after the surgery, this is free of charge.

How much will it cost?

We offer reasonable and fair prices. Price range from £290 - £405 for mole removal, however, this is dependable on size and complexity, and whether your mole is sent off for Laboratory analysis. Following removal we can send off your mole for laboratory analysis. This isn't always necessary and we will make recommendations during your pre op appointment. We have negotiated a very reasonable fee with the Nuffield Hospital in Leamington Spa for histology, and we make no profit on this service.

Does the procedure hurt?

You will feel some discomfort from the initial local anaesthetic injection for about 20 seconds. Following the procedure, the wound may be sore for 7-10 days. After it has healed, the area may be itchy. You can apply 1% hydrocortisone cream twice daily for up to 3 days. This can be bought at most pharmacies.



What are the pros and cons of each technique?

Shave Excision:

- Very little scarring occurs in 45% of moles treated on the head and 30% on the body. In the remainder, scars tend to be smaller than the original lesion and are often slightly indented.
- It is uncommon for a lumpy scar to develop, but it is more likely on the upper chest and shoulders, especially in younger people.
- Any wound encourages new blood vessels to form, which means the scar/skin may always look slightly red. More usually the skin becomes slightly paler than the surrounding tissue.
- Up to 25% of moles removed may grow back in time. With careful attention to detail during surgery, our rates are much better than this at around 10%. Regrowth is much more common in patients under the age of 30 years and with large flat moles.
- Seborrhoeic keratoses can almost always be removed without scarring as they sit within the top layer of skin
- Skin tag removal often leaves a tiny pinpoint scar.

Formal Excision (cut and stitch):

- Lesions removed by formal excision are easier to remove completely with virtually no chance of regrowth or recurrence.
- There will be a short linear scar that may or may not be easily visible.
- Whilst it is usually not very noticeable, it may be lumpy or flat and either pink, brown or pale in colour. In areas of high tension, the skin is sometimes unable to retain enough strength to heal and the wound widens and heals with an unsightly scar. The shoulders, legs and back are high-risk areas for this, the face, neck and arms are low risk.
- There is a higher chance of post-operative infection than with the shave excisions, at around 5%.

How long does it take to heal?

With shave excision, you will have a wound similar to a graze. This will typically take 7-10 days to heal and could be red for a few months before leaving a normal skin colour, or a paler or darker flat mark. The skin may ooze or be sore immediately following the procedure, but most patients can return to work on the same day. If you have your mole/blemish removed by formal excision, then the healing could take slightly longer. Stitches will be removed after one or two weeks

How many moles/blemishes can be removed in one procedure?

Many patients have multiple growths and it is possible to remove several during the same procedure. However, it's preferable to remove one or two growths first to see how your skin heals and recovers.