

## Curette, Shave Biopsy, or Shave Excision (Local Anaesthetic)

### Patient Information Leaflet

This leaflet has been prepared to help you understand your upcoming procedure — a **curettage (scraping), shave biopsy, or shave excision** — and to guide you through your preparation, recovery, and aftercare.

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#### Why do I need this procedure?

You have a **skin lesion** (for example, a mole, wart, scar, or ulcer) that needs to be **biopsied or removed**. This is done to:

- **Diagnose** the cause of the lesion (if the diagnosis is uncertain).
  - **Treat** the problem by removing the abnormal skin.
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#### Aims and benefits of the procedure

- To **remove or sample** the lesion completely and safely.
- To **send the tissue for laboratory analysis (histology)** for diagnosis.
- To achieve the **best possible cosmetic outcome** while ensuring accurate diagnosis and effective treatment.

Your doctor will discuss the likely results, potential risks, and expected recovery before you sign your consent form. Please ask as many questions as you need.

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#### Preparing for your procedure

Before your appointment:

- **Stop smoking and avoid alcohol** — both can delay wound healing.
- Inform your doctor or nurse about:
  - Any **medical conditions** you have or have had.
  - **Allergies** or past problems with anaesthetics.
  - **All medications** you currently take.
  - **Pacemaker or similar devices**, if applicable.
- If you are taking **Warfarin**, please have your **INR checked 3–5 days** before your procedure. Your INR must be **3 or less**.
- Continue other blood-thinning medications unless told otherwise.

Bring a **list of your medications** with you on the day.

If you have any questions, contact us on **01202 702827** or **info@southfaceskin.com**.

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### On the day of your procedure

Your procedure may take place at one of the following locations:

- **Southface Dermatology Clinic**, 1 Avenue Road, Christchurch, BH23 2BU
- **Nuffield Health Bournemouth**, 67 Lansdowne Road, Bournemouth

Please arrive:

- **15–20 minutes early** if attending Nuffield Health Bournemouth
- **5 minutes early** if attending Southface Dermatology Clinic

You may bring a **friend or relative** to accompany you.

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### What does the procedure involve?

- A **local anaesthetic** is injected under the skin to numb the area. This may sting briefly but quickly becomes numb for several hours.
  - The skin is cleaned with a **cold antiseptic solution** and covered with **sterile drapes**. Please keep still during the procedure.
  - The lesion is then removed using:
    - A **shave biopsy/excision** – the lesion is shaved flat with the skin surface.
    - A **curettage** – the lesion is gently scraped away using a small instrument.
  - The wound is then **cauterised** (sealed with gentle heat) to stop bleeding.
  - The treated area will look like a **shallow burn or graze**, which will dry, scab, and heal over time.
  - The removed tissue is sent to the **laboratory for analysis**.
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### After your procedure

You will be able to go home soon after the procedure.

Rest for the remainder of the day and **follow the wound care advice** given by your nurse or doctor.

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### Wound care and dressings

- Keep the initial dressing **in place for 48 hours** (unless advised otherwise).
  - After 48 hours, you can remove the dressing and gently clean the area.
  - The wound will form a **scab**, which normally falls off after **10–14 days**. Larger areas may take longer and go through **crusting and re-crusting** before fully healing.
  - You can apply **Vaseline™** to soften the scab, reduce itching, and promote healing.
  - Avoid **swimming or soaking the wound** in water until it is fully healed.
  - The area may remain **pink or slightly raised** for several weeks before fading.
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## Pain and activity

- Take **paracetamol** for any discomfort (maximum 8 tablets in 24 hours).
  - Avoid **aspirin or ibuprofen** unless prescribed, as these may increase bleeding.
  - You can usually **return to normal activities within 24 hours**, but avoid stretching or bumping the treated area.
  - If your procedure was on your **arm or leg**, rest the limb and keep it **elevated** as advised.
  - Follow any specific rest instructions given to you at discharge.
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## Histology results

Your results will be available in **2–6 weeks** and will be sent **by letter** or discussed at a **follow-up appointment**. If further treatment is needed, your doctor will contact you to arrange this.

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## Aftercare and recovery – DO's and DON'Ts

### DO:

- Keep the wound clean and dry for 48 hours.
- Use Vaseline™ to moisturise and soften the healing skin.
- Rest as advised.
- Contact the clinic if you have any concerns.

### DON'T:

- Soak the wound or swim until healed.
- Drink alcohol or eat spicy food for 24 hours if the procedure was on your face or mouth area.
- Drive for 24 hours or until you can do so safely.

You can return to **work or normal activities** when you feel comfortable — usually the next day. Resume **exercise or sexual activity** once the area feels healed and comfortable.

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## Possible risks and complications

This is a minor and generally safe procedure, but as with any surgery, there are potential risks:

Complication	How common?	Details
<b>Bleeding</b>	1 in 10	Apply firm pressure for 5–10 minutes and keep area elevated. If bleeding continues, contact us or go to your nearest emergency department.
<b>Bruising / Haematoma</b>	1 in 10	A large bruise may need drainage; this is rare.
<b>Pain</b>	1 in 50	Take paracetamol as needed; avoid aspirin or ibuprofen.
<b>Infection</b>	1 in 50	Signs include redness, swelling, pus, or fever. Contact us or your GP if this occurs.

Complication	How common?	Details
Scarring / Keloid	All / 1 in 100	Some scarring is inevitable; keloids are rare and more likely on the upper torso or in younger people.
Numbness or nerve pain	1 in 50	Usually temporary; may persist in rare cases.
Blood clot (DVT/PE)	Very rare	Move your legs and feet regularly to prevent this.
Recurrence or further treatment	1 in 200	Sometimes additional surgery may be required depending on histology results.

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### Local anaesthetic – possible side effects

Most people tolerate local anaesthetic very well.

- **Common:** mild pain on injection, brief palpitations, bruising, or mild soreness.
- **Uncommon (1 in 1,000):** worsening of an existing medical condition.
- **Rare (1 in 10,000–100,000):** allergic reaction or nerve damage.

Please inform your doctor if you are **pregnant** or have **any medical concerns** before your procedure.

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### Changing your mind

You can **change your decision or withdraw consent** at any time before the procedure. Your doctor can discuss **alternative treatments** if you wish.

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### Who to contact

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

 [info@southfaceskin.com](mailto:info@southfaceskin.com)

 **01202 702827**