

Minor surgery – What to expect?

Dr. Omer Rauf MBBS, MRCP, PgDip (Derm)

Dr Rauf performs the Minor Surgery for the practice. Patients have to be seen by a GP first and, if suitable, they will be asked to make an appointment for Minor Surgery.

Things to note before your operation

Please have a shower or bath before coming to your appointment. You can have a light meal beforehand.

You may prefer to arrange for somebody else to bring you to your appointment and take you home afterwards. Although it's unlikely to be a problem we would not advise travelling unaccompanied by public transport in case you feel unwell afterwards.

It helps to wear loose fitting clothing. You will not be required to strip off completely and we usually only need to expose the affected part.

If you are attending for removal of an ingrowing toenail then it is advisable to wear loose fitting or open-toed shoes or sandals as your toe will be bandaged after the procedure.

You will be awake throughout and no sedation is required. The operation will be conducted under local anaesthetic (an injection to make the area go numb.) You will feel a mild discomfort for a few seconds as the anaesthetic is administered.

Thereafter you should feel no pain at all.

We are not able to accommodate companions in the minor surgery room but they are welcome to sit in the waiting room whilst you are having your operation.

What to expect

Before your surgery Dr Rauf will explain exactly what procedure is being done and why. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions about

the procedure being performed and/or any alternative treatments - including what would result if you decided not to have surgery.

We would like to emphasize that any procedure involving cutting the skin will result in a scar. In some circumstances the scar may be larger or more prominent than the lesion being removed. It is for this reason that Dr. Rauf has a policy not to remove skin lesions for purely cosmetic reasons.

If a lesion has been cut out or biopsied (where a small piece of the lesion is removed to help with diagnosis) then it will be sent for "Histology" to the Lab, this is routine for all cases and does not necessarily mean that we suspect malignancy. We would ask that all patients who have had a sample sent for Histology telephone the surgery 4-6 weeks after their procedure to enquire about the results and find out if a follow up appointment with the GP is needed.

Will there be any pain?

This often depends on the operation site but after most procedures there is little pain. Large wounds or those in areas subject to pressure (i.e., the foot) or where there is a lot of movement (i.e., the shoulder) can be more uncomfortable. The local anaesthetic will start to wear off 3 hours after your operation. We recommend that you take some painkillers 2 hours after your operation so that they start to work as your anaesthetic wears off.

Looking after your wound

Unless the doctor advises otherwise, any dressings should remain dry and intact for 24 hours. After 24 hours you may have a shower or bath and gently pat the wound dry afterwards. Avoid applying soap or talcum powder directly to the wound for two weeks as it may cause irritation or soreness and impair the healing process.

Complications

Complications are rare. If your wound is bleeding then this can usually be stopped by applying firm pressure over the dressing, with a clean dry cloth or towel, for 10 minutes.

Signs of infection include a fever, increasing redness or pain around the wound and a mucky green or yellow discharge.

Occasionally you may notice an area of numbness adjacent to the wound as a result of damage to one of the small nerves in the skin.

If you think you have an infection or have any concerns about your wound following minor surgery then please telephone the surgery to speak to the Doctor or Practice Nurse so that an assessment can be arranged.

You should be able to return to normal activities, including driving, as soon as you feel able. Most patients will be back at work the next day or in 2-3 days

Stitches

Not all procedures involve stitches. However, if you have non-dissolving stitches you will need to book an appointment with the practice nurse to have your stitches removed. We recommend that you book this appointment on the day of your operation before you leave. The doctor will advise you of exactly when your stitches should be removed before you leave.