

Gwinnett Dermatology, P.C.



Dr. Keith D. Wright, M.D.

What is MOHS Surgery?

Mohs Micrographic Surgery is the most advanced and effective treatment procedure for skin cancer available today. With the Mohs technique, physicians are able to see beyond the visible disease, to precisely identify and remove the entire tumor layer by layer while leaving the surrounding healthy tissue intact and unharmed. This minimizes the chance of re-growth and lessens the potential for scarring and disfigurement. Because Mohs Surgeons are specially trained in surgery, pathology, and reconstruction, Mohs surgery has the highest success rate of all treatments for skin cancer-up to 99 percent.

Why do I need Mohs Micrographic Surgery?

This technique is used primarily to treat basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas.

Mohs surgery is appropriate when:

- The cancer is in an area where it is important to preserve healthy tissue in areas that are cosmetically necessary, such as eyelids, nose, ears, lips and the face;
- The cancer was treated previously and reoccurred;
- Scar tissue exists in the area of the cancer;
- The cancer is large;
- The edges of the cancer cannot be clearly defined;
- The cancer is growing rapidly or uncontrollably

How do I prepare for this surgery?

- Take all required prescription medication unless otherwise instructed by our surgery department
- It is not necessary to fast for this procedure; in fact we recommend that you do eat because you will be in our office anywhere from 2-4 hours.
- Wear comfortable clothes
- Do not wear cologne or perfume;
- Women- do not wear makeup;
- If your surgery site is around the eye area you WILL need a driver;
- If you take anti-anxiety medication the day of your surgery that may cause drowsiness you WILL need a driver

What is done during the procedure?

- The biopsy site will be numbed up locally (you will NOT be put to sleep);
- An excision a few millimeters wider and deeper than the biopsy is performed. The tissue is removed, and you will remain in the room while the tissue is prepared in- office.
- Once the tumor has been removed, your Mohs Surgeon may elect to let the area heal in if it is small, or reconstruct the wound if it is large.
- If reconstruction is selected, you will have stitches

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What should I expect during the recovery period?

- You will have a thick pressure bandage on your face (NOT A BAND-AID) when you leave the office that will remain for 3-5 days;
- There will be swelling around the eyes 24-48 hours after your surgery- THIS IS NORMAL;
- There will be bruising, if you normally take a blood thinner-THIS IS NORMAL;
- You will have stitches that may require a second visit within one week of your surgery;
- You will be given a sample of medication called Aquaphor to use on your surgery site – You will need to pick this up at your local drugstore. This is not a prescription, it is over-the-counter;
- Do NOT travel the week of and the week after your surgery, because if you have problems such as bleeding we CANNOT get to you;
- Any vitamins or over-the-counter medications you have been asked to stop prior to your surgery can be resumed one week after your surgery;

Will there be a scar?

There is no such thing as a surgery without a scar. There will be a scar, but Dr. Wright will reconstruct the area so that the scar will not be very noticeable once it is completely healed. If you would prefer to have a plastic surgeon complete the repair, please let us know prior to scheduling surgery.

What is required for long term care once the skin cancer has been removed?

Once the skin cancer has been removed, you will be referred back to the physician that did the original biopsy. You will need to have a skin exam at least twice a year. Once you have had a basal cell or squamous cell carcinoma, there is about a 50% chance that you will get another one in another location. If you have regular skin exams, you can possibly prevent having to have extensive surgery if it caught in time.

A Quick Look at Dr. Keith Wright

In response to your most likely asked questions, we have created this mini-biography of Dr. Wright, your Mohs Surgeon.

Dr. Wright did his undergraduate work at Morehouse College in Atlanta, graduating with Honors. He then attended and completed medical school at Meharry Medical College in Nashville. He distinguished himself at Meharry as an Honor's Graduate and received the Forde Award for Outstanding Senior, the Shrophshire Memorial Surgery Award and was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society, which is the highest award a medical student can achieve.

His internship was served at Rush Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago and his residency at Brown University and Affiliated Hospitals in Providence, Rhode Island. He then came back to Atlanta and completed a Moh's Micrographic/Dermatologic Surgery Fellowship at Emory. He has published articles on Trichoblastoma, Actinic Chelitis, Primary Cutaneous Malignant Melanoma and surgical complications. Dr. Wright is Board Certified in Dermatology; a member of the American Academy of Dermatology, American College of Moh's Micrographic Surgery and Cutaneous Oncology and the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery.

Dr. Wright joined Drs. Shavin and Weiss at Gwinnett Dermatology in 1998 and quickly established himself as a caring and competent physician and a welcome addition to the practice.