

## REPAIR OF SKIN CANCER EXCISIONS (MOHS)



Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States and involves abnormal growths of skin cells that can form anywhere on the body, but most frequently appear on skin that is exposed to the sun, such as the face.

### DIAGNOSIS

To diagnose skin cancer, the following examinations may be completed:

▶ **Examinations:**

- ◇ Examine your skin to determine changes in the skin.

▶ **Biopsy:**

- ◇ A sample of the suspicious or changing skin can be removed and tested for cancer.

### TYPE OF SKIN CANCER

There are three major types of skin cancer that affect the associated layers of the skin.

▶ **Squamous Cell Carcinoma:**

- ◇ Affects the squamous cells, which are just below the outer surface of the skin and serve as the inner lining.

▶ **Basal Cell Carcinoma:**

- ◇ Affects the basal cells, which lay under the squamous cells and produce new skin cells.

▶ **Melanoma:**

- ◇ This is the most serious form of skin cancer and affects the melanocytes, which produce melanin.

Medical attention is necessary after noticing any changes to the skin, as early detection is valuable in successfully treating skin cancer. Regular full body screening is recommended as well. A biopsy is usually performed to accurately diagnose suspected cancerous growths. If not treated properly, skin cancer can spread to other areas of the body.

### SYMPTOMS

▶ **Squamous Cell Carcinoma:**

- ◇ Red nodule
- ◇ Scaled or crusted surface

▶ **Basal Cell Carcinoma:**

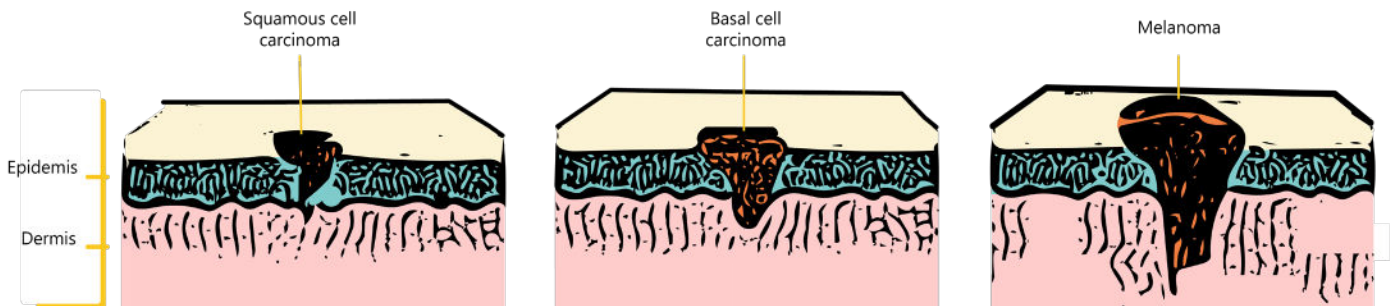
- ◇ Pearly or waxy bump
- ◇ Flesh colored or brown
- ◇ Bleeding scar that heals and returns

▶ **Melanoma:**

- ◇ Large brownish spot
- ◇ Mole that changes color and size
- ◇ Mole that bleeds or scabs
- ◇ Painful, itchy, or burns

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### Types of Skin Cancer



### TREATMENT

#### ► Surgery Options:

- ◊ **MOHS:** Skin cancer is extremely common in the United States, especially in our sunny state of California. Fortunately these skin cancers are curable when removed in a timely fashion. This is often being performed by our dermatology colleagues with a procedure called Mohs micrographic surgery, where the skin cancers and the edges are looked at under a microscope to assure that the cancer cells are all gone. As trained head and neck surgeons / facial plastic surgeons, we specialize in repairing these defects with minimal cosmetic deformity. These are most commonly done with the patients completely awake using local anesthetic.
  - » There is a slim chance of Mohs growing after surgery; however, it is still recommended to see a physician to monitor the surgical site.
  - » **Post-operative Tips:**
    - Avoid the sun or UV rays. If you are exposed to the sun always wear coverage.
    - Use SPF daily.