

SHAVE & ELECTROSURGERY TREATMENT FOR SKIN CANCER PATIENT INFORMATION

SHAVE & ELECTROSURGERY

For some thin, superficial skin cancers, shaving and electrosurgery (“cautery”) represents a quick and effective method of treatment.

The area to be treated is marked preoperatively and an earthing pad is attached to your hand.

The local anaesthetic is injected, the skin cancer is carefully shaved off and the area is treated by electrosurgery. Finally, the assisting nurse applies a dressing to the treated area. The removed tissue is sent to the pathologist for reporting.

POSTOPERATIVE CARE:

The dressing should be left in place for 24 hours. The treated area may weep a little for several days.

For the first few days, please clean the wound daily with 3% hydrogen peroxide to remove the scabs and apply Vaseline under a non-stick dressing. Thereafter you may either:

1. continue daily dressings until the wound heals in a few weeks
or
2. permit a crust to form and stop doing dressings. The crust will fall off in 3–4 weeks to leave a pink area. This will subsequently slowly shrink and become a small round pale flat scar.

Occasionally the healing scar becomes raised and irritated. If this happens an injection of cortisone will usually flatten the scar and stop the irritation.

In the event of this happening, or if you have any questions or problems during the course of your treatment please call:

Adelaide Skin & Eye Centre 8211 0000 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)