

Mohs Micrographic Surgery

At Dermatology & Dermatologic Surgery Group
of Northern Virginia, PLLC

Our goal is to provide the highest quality care for the treatment of skin cancer. This information is to answer questions regarding the Mohs Micrographic procedure for surgically removing skin cancer.

At Dermatology & Dermatologic Surgery Group of Northern Virginia, PLLC, Mohs micrographic surgery is performed by Dr. Kelley P. Redbord. Dr. Redbord, who is both surgeon and pathologist, has received specialized training and certification in this technique.

Mohs micrographic surgery is safe, reliable, and has a significantly higher cure rate than any other available treatment, even when dealing with difficult cases and those that have failed other forms of treatment. In addition, Mohs surgery is a "tissue-sparing" technique, which allows for selective removal of cancerous tissue while reserving as much normal skin as possible. Mohs surgery is done as a same-day outpatient surgical procedure in our office. This eliminates the need for general anesthesia and operating room or hospital fees.

Mohs micrographic surgery is a highly specialized and precise treatment for skin cancer in which cancerous cells are removed in stages, one tissue layer at a time. Once a tissue layer is removed, its edges are marked with specially colored dyes, and a map of the specimen is created. The tissue is then processed onto microscope slides by a trained Mohs surgery histotechnician in our on-site laboratory. These slides are examined carefully by Dr. Redbord under the microscope, so that any microscopic traces of the cancer can be identified precisely and mapped. When cancer cells are seen, an additional tissue layer is removed only from areas where the cancer cells are still present, leaving normal skin intact. This process is repeated until no traces of cancerous cells is found.

Because Mohs surgery is a highly specialized technique, not all skin cancers require this treatment. Your doctor has referred you for Mohs surgery based on special considerations regarding your skin cancer. Examples include: a skin cancer which has "come back" after previous treatment; a tumor with microscopic features suggesting it may be aggressive or have extensive "roots"; and a skin cancer on the face or other area where sparing of normal tissue is essential.

The term "Mohs" refers to Dr. Frederic Mohs, Professor of Surgery at the University of Wisconsin, who developed this surgical technique in the early 1940's. The technique has undergone many refinements and has come to be known as "Mohs surgery" in honor of Dr. Mohs.

