Mohs surgery is the single most effective technique for removing skin cancer, providing the highest cure rate and the smallest scar possible. Mohs surgery treats cosmetically and functionally sensitive areas around the eyes, nose, lips, ears, scalp, hands, feet and genitals.

What Sets Us Apart

- Our surgeons are fellowship-trained by the American College of Mohs Surgery (ACMS).
- High-volume experience with each surgeon performing more than 5,000 procedures.
- We treat melanoma in certain cases of early-stage disease with a modified form of Mohs surgery.
- Access to Roswell Park’s full spectrum of supportive care from the providers who know cancer best.
What is Mohs Surgery?

Skin cancers can have roots and extensions not visible on the surface. Mohs surgery is a meticulous process in which the surgeon removes one layer of skin at a time, checking each under a microscope during the surgery, until all the cancer is removed.

Mohs surgery is important for skin cancers that:

- Are located in areas where it is important to preserve as much normal, healthy tissue as possible for the optimal function and appearance
- Have come back after previous treatment
- Are large, aggressive, or growing rapidly
- Do not have clearly defined edges
- Develop in organ transplant or other immunosuppressed patient

What Happens During Mohs Surgery?

1. **ANESTHESIA**: Local anesthetic is injected to numb the area.
2. **EXCISION**: The area of the cancer is removed so that the entire undersurface and skin edges can be examined microscopically.
3. **SLIDE PREPARATION**: Tissue is dyed and a map is drawn. Tissue is processed onto microscopic slides.
4. **ANALYSIS**: The surgeon examines the slides under the microscope. If cancer cells are found, they are marked on the map to guide the surgeon in removing additional tissue.
5. **MORE LAYERS**: More layers of tissue will be removed.
6. **CLOSURE**: Reconstruction options chosen based on size and depth of the wound.
7. **BORDERS: CANCER**: Cancer is gone.
8. **BORDERS: CLEAR**: Reconstruction options chosen based on size and depth of the wound.

Before Your Surgery — What You Should Know

Mohs surgery can be completed in a single-visit, outpatient procedure with local anesthesia. Preparation for your surgery will include these instructions:

- Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours before surgery.
- Get a good night sleep.
- Shower and wash hair and face on the day of the surgery.
- Eat a normal breakfast. Bring a lunch or snack.
- Wear clothing that buttons in the front.
- Do not wear jewelry or makeup if surgery is to be performed on the face.
- Bring a friend or relative to keep you company and to assist you in getting home. A good book or magazine would also be helpful. Wifi is available in the waiting room.

Medications: If any medications need to be discontinued, you will be given instructions prior to your surgery date. Otherwise, it is important that you continue to take all your medications like you normally do. If you need to take medications during the day, bring them with you.