

GENERAL SURGERY

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When to Worry About a Mole and Why a Biopsy Matters?

Welcome to the November newsletter, as a general surgeon, I am committed to empowering patients with knowledge to navigate their healthcare journeys confidently. This month, we look at skin lesions and mole biopsies and when to look for assistance?

Skin lesion and mole biopsy

A new spot, mole or bump can raise concern, as a general surgeon one of the procedures I perform are biopsies, a skin lesion or mole biopsy is a simple yet crucial test that helps detect early skin cancer or other skin conditions before they become serious.

What is a biopsy?

A biopsy means taking a small sample of skin tissue and sending it to a lab for examination under a microscope. It is a quick, usually painless procedure done under local anaesthesia and it can provide clarity and peace of mind in just a few days. A biopsy helps determine whether a mole or skin lesion is harmless or requires further treatment. Early testing allows for timely intervention and better outcomes for your skin health.

General Surgery News

I pick a topic each month and discuss it in detail on my social media accounts.



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The importance of early medical attention

When it comes to skin health, timing can make all the difference. Many patients delay getting a mole checked because it seems minor but skin cancer can develop silently, often starting as a small easily overlooked change. Early medical attention allows for quick diagnosis and simple treatment, often before the problem becomes serious. A biopsy performed at the right time can prevent advanced disease, reducing the need for more extensive surgery and significantly improve long-term outcomes.

What are the warning signs?

You should consider a skin check or biopsy if you notice changes in size, colour, shape or texture of a mole or if it bleeds and itches. These could be warning signs of melanoma or other skin cancers conditions that are highly treatable when caught early.

Punch biopsy vs a Shave biopsy vs a Excisional biopsy

There are different types of skin biopsies depending on what we need to investigate. A shave biopsy removes the surface layer of skin for testing, ideal for raised moles or superficial lesions. A punch biopsy takes a small circular sample that includes deeper layers, often used when we need a full-thickness look at the skin. An excisional biopsy removes the entire mole or lesion, commonly performed when there's a strong suspicion of skin cancer. Your surgeon will choose the right method based on your specific case.

what happens during a biopsy?

During the procedure, the area is numbed, the suspicious mole or lesion is carefully removed or sampled and a small dressing is applied. Most patients return to their normal routine immediately after. Results are usually available within a week, guiding the next step whether it is reassurance or further treatment.

Final thoughts



Your skin is your body's first line of defense and it deserves your attention. Whether a mole turns out to be harmless or something that needs treatment, the only way to know for sure is to have it examined and if necessary, biopsied. Skin lesion and mole biopsies are simple, safe and highly effective diagnostic tools that give clear answers and guide the best care. Remember, awareness and early intervention are powerful forms of prevention.