

MINOR SURGERY

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1 MINOR SKIN CONDITIONS

Here is a list of common skin problems we can deal with. Local anaesthetic is required for all these procedures.

1.1 Skin tags

These are small skin coloured ‘tags’ often found around the eyes, neck and in the armpits usually a few millimetres in size but they can be much larger. If they catch on clothes and jewellery or cause problems with makeup or shaving they can be removed by cauterly, even if they are on the eyelid. Sometimes they form as fleshy ‘polyps’ around the anus. Normally these do not require any treatment but if they are causing symptoms they can also be removed.



1.2 Moles

Most moles are benign patches of skin cells containing brown or almost black pigment. A small proportion of moles are cancerous (malignant melanoma) and this is a serious type of cancer. Should we think there is any possibility of you having this we will refer you to an NHS specialist at once.

Benign moles may be flat or raised, large or small, smooth or hairy and often there is no reason to remove them. However if it is done they need to be cut out and in most cases it is wise to send them off to a laboratory to be examined.



1.3 Warts

There are 2 common types.

Viral warts are small skin growths caused by a virus infecting the skin. A viral wart on the foot is known as a **verruca**. Often, given long enough, viral warts will disappear on their own but this can take years rather than months, or they can be self-treated with paint bought from the chemist. We can remove them by cauterising or freezing them but they often come back so waiting for them to go on their own is usually best.



Seborrhoeic warts are very common. They are brown, crusty growths which build up as patches on older skin, often on a person's back. Some people are prone and have a large number. They can irritate and sometimes catch on clothing. They are simple to remove with cautery.



1.4 Sebaceous cysts

These form under the skin when a grease gland becomes blocked and the grease builds up. They may be multiple, on the scalp or face or anywhere on the body. They can become very large and it is generally wise to remove them because they are prone to becoming infected. They have to be cut out.



Drainage of cysts.

Some types of simple cyst can be drained with a needle and syringe. This treatment also sometimes works for a ganglion, which is a type of cyst forming around a joint for example on the finger. Unfortunately they often recur and may be best left untreated.



1.5 Lipomas

These are harmless growths of fatty tissue and can occur anywhere on the body, varying from small, like a pea, to large like the size of an orange, or bigger. If they are causing symptoms they can be removed. Sometimes they have grown on a stalk and can be cauterised away but more often they have to be cut out.



1.6 Spider naevi

These are skin blood vessels which have become enlarged to form spidery red blobs in the skin. They can be cauterised away.



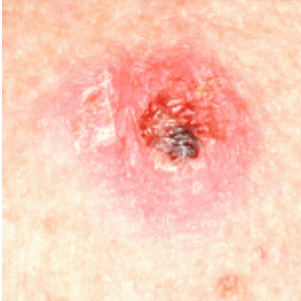
1.7 Basal Cell Carcinomas (rodent ulcers or BCCs)

These are a type of skin cancer which grows very slowly but is better removed. They can be cut out, treated by radiotherapy or sometimes by applying cream. The best choice depends on where they are on the body and how large and thick they have become. They must be sent to the hospital for examination and further treatment at the hospital may be necessary.



1.8 Squamous cell carcinomas

These are more rapidly growing skin cancers and we like to remove these promptly before they become any larger. As with BCCs follow up treatment at the hospital may be necessary.



There are many other types of rarer skin growths most of which we are able to treat. If we cannot safely do so we can recommend an appropriate specialist.

2 TREATMENT OF THE EYE AREA

2.1 Meibomian cysts.

These are lumps in the eyelid, usually the upper, caused by a blocked eyelash grease gland. If they do not go away on their own they can be removed.



2.2 Tear (lacrima) duct flush through

Sometimes the tear duct which drains the eye becomes blocked and the eye waters continuously. In many cases, but not all, this can be treated by flushing the duct through.

3 OTHER MINOR SURGERY PROCEDURES

3.1 Steroid injections for a painful joint, trigger finger, heel and other sites

Steroid injections can relieve pain and inflammation and can be used in many parts of the body.

3.2 Haemorrhoids (Piles)

These are very common and if they are causing pain, bleeding or other symptoms and creams have not helped they can be injected or banded. Sometimes a pile forms a very painful lump just outside the anus. This is known as a perianal haematoma and the pain is relieved quickly if it is drained as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours.

3.3 Sigmoidoscopy

This is the most basic type of test performed for patients with symptoms such as rectal bleeding or a change in their motions. Its advantage is that it is available quickly and our service provides a diagnosis for 90% of patients. When this test does not provide an answer the patient may need to be referred to hospital outpatients for further tests. Sigmoidoscopy is good at detecting piles, fissures, tumours and ulceration of the rectum, the lowest part of the bowel.

3.4 Treatment of In-Growing Toe Nails

In-growing or seriously damaged toenails can cause a lot of pain. If the condition does not get better with antibiotics and careful nail trimming then part or the whole of a toenail can be removed under local anaesthetic.

