



## POST-OPERATIVE INFORMATION SHEET

### SKIN CANCER SURGERY

#### What happens after my operation?

Most patients will go home after surgery for skin cancer. If Dr Lancashire has arranged for you to stay in hospital overnight, you will be transferred from the operating theatres to the surgical ward. You will have a dressing over your wound.

Relatives are permitted to visit you on the ward on the day of your surgery. It is recommended that all guests check visiting hours with the hospital so that patient rest periods aren't interrupted.

#### Managing pain or discomfort

- People will experience different levels of discomfort and pain after surgery. This is quite normal
- Many people are surprised how little pain they have after skin cancer surgery
- If you require a general anaesthetic, your anaesthetist will talk to you about pain management before your operation
- There will be pain medication available for you to ask for on the ward after your operation, and Dr Lancashire will prescribe pain relief for you to take home if you require it

#### Caring for your wounds / stitches

- If your wound has been closed with dissolving sutures they will not need to be removed
- If you have visible stitches, Dr Lancashire will advise you on when they will need to be removed
- If the wound is covered with a waterproof dressing, Dr Lancashire recommends leaving it on for at least 7 – 10 days but will give you advice specific to your surgery before you leave hospital
- You can shower normally with a waterproof dressing but avoid soaking them in the bath
- It is not unusual to notice some dry blood under the dressing. This will not cause any problems
- Smoking can increase the risk of wound complications and delay wound healing
- Dr Lancashire will review your wound at your post-operative appointment and will give you information about your wound management and ways to minimize long-term scarring

#### How long will it take for me to recover?

- Your recovery will depend on the extent of surgery you have as well as your general health
- It is important to have someone drive you home from the hospital
- Dr Lancashire will provide a medical certificate for your time in hospital and your recovery period

#### Resuming activities

- This will depend on the site and extent of your surgery
- Usually, you can begin low impact exercise (for example, walking) immediately after your surgery
- Feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns regarding activities you wish to resume or commence immediately after your surgery.

#### Post-operative problems

The following issues may be encountered following any form of surgery:

- Wound Infection
  - Redness, swelling or pain not relieved by simple pain relief
  - Discharge from the wound
  - Feeling generally unwell or a fever over 38 degrees
  - Most simple wound infections can be managed with a course of tablet antibiotics
  - You should contact Dr Lancashire's rooms if you have symptoms or signs of a wound infection



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- Bruising or haematoma
  - Bruising is common after every type of surgery
  - Most bruising disappears within a couple of weeks
  - Sometimes a large bruise/blood clot can form under a wound (haematoma)
  - Most small haematomas will resolve slowly over time
- Fever
  - Please contact Dr Lancashire if you develop a fever over 38 degrees

## When should I contact Dr Lancashire?

You can feel free to contact Dr Lancashire's rooms at any time. He would like to know if you have any concerns before or after your surgery.

If you have any of the above post-operative problems, or have any concerns at all, please don't hesitate to call for advice or reassurance.

## Useful contact numbers:

- Dr Ben Lancashire's Rooms: (07) 3054 0694
- Mater Private Emergency Centre: (07) 3163 1000
- Mater Private Hospital Switchboard: (07) 3163 8111