

Benign Lesion Excision

(Removal of non-cancerous skin growths for comfort, function, or diagnosis)

What Is Benign Lesion Excision?

Benign lesion excision is a minor, in-office procedure to **surgically remove a non-cancerous skin growth**. These growths are not skin cancer, but they may be removed because they are:

- Irritated or painful
- Bleeding or repeatedly traumatized
- Growing or changing
- Functionally bothersome (rubbing on clothing, shaving area)
- Cosmetically concerning
- Uncertain in diagnosis and need confirmation by pathology



Figure 5: (a) Nevus left temporal area. Elliptical single stage excision would leave a long scar, with a pull on the lateral eyebrow. (b) Biaxial serial excision, th

Common Benign Lesions We Excise

Benign excision may be recommended for lesions such as:

- **Moles (nevi)** that are benign but bothersome or changing
- **Cysts** (when complete removal is appropriate)
- **Lipomas** (fatty growths)
- **Dermatofibromas**
- **Seborrheic keratoses** (selected cases)
- **Benign tumors or growths** of uncertain behavior

Your dermatologist will first confirm that the lesion appears benign and discuss whether excision is the best option.

What Happens During the Procedure

Benign lesion excision is usually performed **in the office** using **local numbing medicine**.

Typical steps include:

1. Cleaning and numbing the area
2. Removing the lesion with a small surgical incision
3. Closing the skin with stitches when needed
4. Applying a bandage

The goal is **complete removal** while minimizing scarring and preserving healthy skin.

Pre-Op Instructions (Before Excision)

1–2 weeks before

- Tell us if you take:
 - **Blood thinners** (warfarin, Eliquis, Xarelto, Plavix, etc.)
 - **Aspirin or NSAIDs** (ibuprofen, naproxen)
 - ⚠ **Do not stop prescription blood thinners** unless your prescribing clinician instructs you.
- Let us know if you have:
 - A bleeding disorder
 - Diabetes or immune suppression
 - History of keloids or thick scarring
 - Allergies to adhesives, antiseptics, or numbing medication

One week before

- Stop drinking **alcohol** (due to blood thinning effect of alcohol)
- stop fish oil supplement
- avoid optional aspirin and NSAIDS: **Ibuprofen** (Advil®, Motrin®), **Naproxen** (Aleve®), **Aspirin** (Bayer®), etc...

Day of procedure

- Eat normally (no fasting needed)
 - Shower and arrive with clean skin
 - Wear loose clothing that won't rub the area
 - Avoid applying lotions or oils directly over the lesion
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Post-Op Instructions (After Excision)

What's normal

- Mild soreness or tightness
- Bruising or swelling around the incision
- Small amount of bleeding on the bandage the first day

Wound care

Follow your clinician's instructions, but typically:

- Keep the bandage on and dry for **24 hours**
- After 24 hours:
 1. Clean gently with soap and water
 2. Pat dry
 3. Apply a thin layer of ointment if instructed
 4. Cover with a clean bandage
- Avoid soaking (baths, pools, hot tubs) until healed

Activity

- Avoid heavy exercise or stretching that pulls on stitches
- Protect the area from friction or trauma

Stitches

- Some stitches dissolve; others require removal
- We will tell you when to return (timing depends on location)

Call the office if you notice

- Increasing redness, warmth, swelling, or pain
 - Pus-like drainage or foul odor
 - Fever or chills
 - Bleeding that doesn't stop after **10–15 minutes** of firm pressure
 - The incision opens
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Scar Care (After Healing)

Once the skin has fully closed:

- Protect the scar from sun exposure
 - Silicone gel or sheets may be recommended
 - Avoid picking scabs or crusts during healing
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Benign Lesion Excision FAQ

If it's benign, why remove it?

Even benign lesions may be removed if they cause symptoms, interfere with daily activities, change in appearance, or need confirmation of diagnosis.

Will I have a scar?

Yes. Any incision leaves a scar, but we aim to place and close incisions carefully to help scars heal as smoothly as possible.

Does the procedure hurt?

You may feel a brief pinch or burning sensation with the numbing injection. After that, most patients feel pressure but not sharp pain.

Do you send the lesion to the lab?

Often, yes—especially if the diagnosis needs confirmation or if recommended by your clinician.

How long does the procedure take?

Most benign lesion excisions take **20–45 minutes**, depending on size and location.

Can a benign lesion come back?

Most do not return if completely removed, though new benign lesions can form elsewhere.

When can I shower or exercise again?

Showering is usually allowed after 24 hours. Exercise restrictions depend on the location of the excision and stitches—we'll give you specific guidance.