

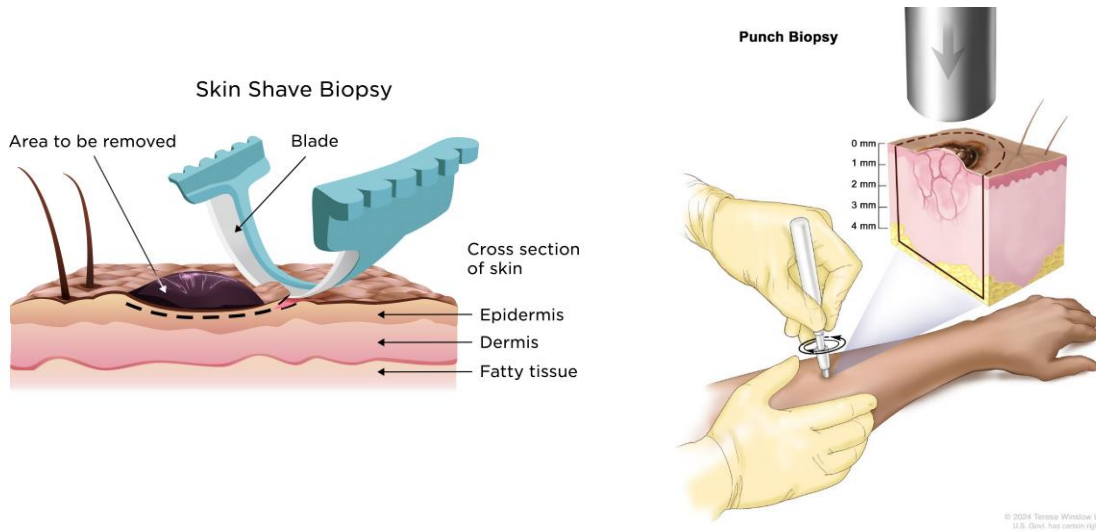
Skin Biopsy

What Is a Skin Biopsy?

A **skin biopsy** is a quick in-office procedure where a dermatologist removes a small sample of skin to be examined under a microscope. It helps diagnose a wide range of conditions, including:

- Suspicious moles or growths (to rule out skin cancer)
- Precancerous lesions
- Chronic rashes and inflammatory skin disease
- Infections and unusual skin changes

A biopsy provides the most accurate diagnosis so treatment can be targeted and appropriate.



Why a Skin Biopsy Is Recommended

Your dermatologist may recommend a biopsy if a spot:

- Is new, changing, or looks different from others
- Bleeds, crusts, or doesn't heal
- Has irregular borders or multiple colors
- Persists despite treatment
- Is part of an unexplained or chronic rash

Types of Skin Biopsies

Your dermatologist chooses the method based on the location, size, and suspected diagnosis:

Shave Biopsy

Removes the top layers of skin. Often used for raised lesions.

Punch Biopsy

Uses a small circular tool to remove a deeper sample. Often used for rashes or inflammatory conditions.

Excisional Biopsy

Removes the entire lesion with a margin of normal skin. Used when complete removal is recommended.

Pre-Op Instructions (Before Your Skin Biopsy)

What to Tell Your Dermatologist

Before your biopsy, please let us know if you:

- Take **blood thinners** (e.g., aspirin, warfarin, clopidogrel, apixaban, rivaroxaban)
- Have a bleeding disorder
- Have a pacemaker/defibrillator (rarely relevant, but good to know)
- Have allergies to medications, bandages, or antiseptics
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding (for medication planning)

⚠ Do not stop any prescribed blood thinner unless instructed by the prescribing physician.

How to Prepare on the Day of Your Procedure

- Eat normally (no fasting needed)
 - Take your regular medications unless instructed otherwise
 - Wear comfortable clothing that allows easy access to the biopsy area
 - Avoid applying lotions, oils, or makeup over the biopsy site
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What to Expect During the Procedure

A skin biopsy is typically fast and done in the office:

1. The area is cleaned
2. Local anesthetic is given (you may feel a brief pinch/burn)
3. The skin sample is removed
4. Bleeding is controlled
5. A bandage is applied
 - o Stitches may be placed depending on biopsy type and depth

Most patients are able to return to normal daily activities right away.

Post-Op Instructions (After Your Skin Biopsy)

Wound Care (General Instructions)

Follow the specific instructions given by your dermatologist, but typical care includes:

For the first 24 hours

- Keep the bandage on and the area dry (unless told otherwise)

After 24 hours (daily care)

1. Wash hands
2. Gently clean the site with mild soap and water
3. Pat dry
4. Apply a thin layer of ointment (as instructed)
5. Cover with a clean bandage

Continue daily until the site is fully healed or stitches are removed.

Activity Restrictions

- Avoid heavy exercise, stretching, or swimming until advised, especially if stitches were placed
 - Showering is usually okay after 24 hours, but avoid soaking the area (baths/hot tubs) unless cleared
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Normal Healing vs. Warning Signs

Normal

- Mild soreness
- Slight redness around the site
- Clear or light pink drainage
- A small scab

Call our office if you notice

- Increasing redness, warmth, swelling, or pus
 - Fever or chills
 - Persistent bleeding that won't stop
 - Increasing pain after the first day
 - Red streaking from the biopsy site
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Bleeding: What to Do

If bleeding occurs:

1. Apply firm pressure with clean gauze for **15 minutes** without checking
 2. If still bleeding, repeat for another 15 minutes
 3. If bleeding continues after 30 minutes of pressure, contact the office
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When Will I Get Results?

Results are often available within **several business days**, depending on the lab and complexity of the case. Our office will contact you with results and next steps.

Will I Have a Scar?

Any biopsy can leave a small scar. Proper wound care and keeping the area moist and covered during healing can help the final appearance.

Where Skin Biopsy Fits in Our Services

Category: 📁 Dermatopathology (Biopsy & Diagnosis) and Skin Cancer & Precancerous Conditions

Skin biopsy is a key tool for accurate diagnosis and treatment planning.

Call to Action

A biopsy provides clarity—and guides the right treatment.

📅 Schedule an Evaluation

Skin Biopsy FAQ

Does a skin biopsy hurt?

The biopsy is performed with local anesthesia. You may feel a brief pinch/burn from the numbing medication, but the procedure itself is usually not painful.

How long does a skin biopsy take?

Most biopsies take **only a few minutes**, with additional time for preparation and aftercare instructions.

Will I need stitches?

Not always. Shave biopsies typically do not require stitches. Punch and excisional biopsies may require stitches depending on depth and location.

Can I drive myself home afterward?

Yes. A skin biopsy is a minor in-office procedure and does not affect your ability to drive.

Can I shower after a biopsy?

Often yes—usually after 24 hours—but avoid soaking the area (baths/hot tubs/swimming) until cleared by your dermatologist.

What if my biopsy bleeds?

Apply firm pressure for 15 minutes. If bleeding continues after 30 minutes of pressure, contact the office.

What happens if the biopsy shows skin cancer?

If skin cancer is diagnosed, we will discuss the most appropriate treatment options, which may include excision, Mohs surgery, or other therapies based on location and type.

Why do some biopsies come back “atypical”?

Some lesions show changes under the microscope that are not cancer but may warrant monitoring or complete removal. We will explain your result clearly and recommend the safest next step.

How should I care for the scar?

Keep the wound clean, moist (as directed), and covered during healing. After the skin has closed, sun protection on the area can help the scar fade.