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# Curettage & Cautery Aftercare

### What is curettage?

Curettage is a scraping technique that is used to destroy the top layer of the skin and is commonly used to remove benign lesions, pre-cancerous and cancerous skin lesions. After the skin has been curetted, an electrical device is used to cauterize the skin and further destroy any cells that may have been left behind. This leaves a graze like area that your body has to heal up.

### What happens after the procedure?

The curette site will be covered by a waterproof dressing and you are advised to keep this in place for 48 hours. The anaesthetic will last a couple of hours. There may be some pain after this and taking paracetamol before the anaesthetic wears off, and regularly for the first day, may help.

### Does it leave a scar?

Yes. All surgical procedures will leave a mark in the skin. This is usually slightly pink to start with and will fade to leave a white scar, roughly the size of the lesion. The scar may be more obvious in patients who have had a skin cancer treated as the curettage often goes deeper. Rarely a thickened scar (keloid) may form. If you have had problems with scars before please inform the doctor.

### Do I need to do anything after the procedure?

The wound from curettage is like a deep graze. We recommend applying Vaseline to the wound regularly to improve healing. It usually takes 2-3 weeks to heal completely. Alternatively, you can leave the wound open to the air and a crust or scab will form. This is your body's natural way of healing. Leave the scab until it naturally comes off.

### Can I get the area wet?

Yes. You can wash and clean the area as normal. However, do not soak/immerse any dressing as that will macerate the surrounding skin and increase the risk of infection.

### Is it likely to get infected?

Wound infections are uncommon. It is normal for the wound to ooze and a crust to form. If redness develops in the surrounding skin or the wound suddenly becomes much more painful then you may need some treatment for a wound infection.