



## Procedure Information Sheet

### Introduction

Skin biopsy is a procedure in which a piece of skin is taken for histological examination to establish diagnosis for skin disorders. It can also be taken for microbiological culture to guide antimicrobial treatment. There are several types of skin biopsy. In shave, punch or incisional biopsy, only part of the lesion is removed for examination. In excisional biopsy, the whole lesion is excised for examination.

### Indications

1. When the diagnosis cannot be made clinically
2. When there is suspicion of skin malignancy
3. To determine the type of pathogen causing skin infection

### Before the Operation / Procedure

1. Local anaesthesia may be required.
2. Skin biopsy is a diagnostic and not a therapeutic procedure. Further treatment will be required after the procedure.
3. Photographs will be taken before and after the procedure.

### After the Operation / Procedure

1. The wound usually takes 1-2 weeks to heal. Sutures removal might be required.
2. Mild oozing is common after the procedure. If bleeding becomes excessive, compress the wound for 5 minutes. If bleeding doesn't stop then continue with wound compression and return to the clinic or the 24 hours outpatient clinic.
3. There is a possibility that a diagnosis cannot be made after the skin biopsy. In this case, further biopsy or excision of the whole lesion may be required.
4. Skin biopsy is not 100% accurate, false-positive or false-negative is possible. It is especially true when only part of the lesion is removed for examination. For example a malignant lesion can be wrongly judged to be benign, and vice versa.

### Risks and Complications

1. Bleeding, infection.
2. Wound dehiscence requiring re-suturing.
3. Unpredictable scarring such as hypertrophic scar, widened scar, depressed scar.
4. Scar pigmentation which may last for a few months to a year or more.

### Disclaimer

This leaflet only provides general information pertaining to this operation / procedure. While common risks and complications are described, the list is not exhaustive, and the degree of risk could also vary between patients. Please contact your doctor for detailed information and specific enquiry.

### Reference

1. M. Llamas-Velasco. Basic concepts in skin biopsy. Part I. Actas Dermosifiliogr. 2012.103(1):12-20
2. M. Llamas-Velasco. Basic concepts in skin biopsy. Part II. Actas Dermosifiliogr. 2012.103(2):100-110

Patient's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Patient's Label**

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital No: \_\_\_\_\_

Episode No: \_\_\_\_\_