



## Complex procedures in dermatology

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### What are complex procedures in dermatology?

When your lesion is removed a complex procedure may be required to enable the hole left behind to close. This would be because it is either in an awkward area or is too large to close directly. The operating doctor may decide to do a flap repair or a skin graft.

**A flap repair** means a piece of skin is moved or rotated into the area where your skin lesion has been removed.

**A skin graft** consists of skin taken from another part of the body and applied to the site where the lesion has been removed.

### Why is it needed?

The aim would be to promote healing and a good cosmetic result.

We would advise you to come with someone who could drive you home after the procedure.

You would be asked to sign a consent form to enable the doctor to do the operation. Make sure you understand and ask any questions you may have.

There can be significant bruising and swelling after a **flap repair**. This can take several days to reduce.



If you are really nervous then you could consider asking your GP for some calming medication, although we do aim to put you at ease.

If you normally use a wheelchair and your mobility is difficult please discuss with the dermatology team as you would normally be expected to lie on an operating table.

## **How will I feel during the procedure?**

Hopefully both the doctor and nurses can help put you at ease by introducing themselves and talking to you.

The local anesthetic initially is like a bee sting but takes effect very quickly. If you feel any pain or discomfort during the procedure, please tell the doctor.

However, you will be able to feel touch and pushing and pulling but this should be pain-free.

## **How will I feel afterwards?**

You will be numb around the operating site for about 2 to 3 hours. You may have some mild pain once the numbness wears off for which you can take paracetamol.

The area may feel tight.

Plan to have a lazy day and rest, even if you feel fine, to give the wound chance to start healing.

## **What happens after the procedure?**

You will have a large dressing covering the wound.

You will be taken to the waiting room to recover and asked to wait 10 minutes or until you feel well enough to travel home.

You are advised to go straight home after your



## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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