

STL | Skin Cancer Specialists



Brandon T. Beal, M.D.

Mohs Micrographic Surgeon
Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon
Board-Certified Mohs Surgeon
Board-Certified Dermatologist



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Welcome to our facility

The following is important information, please read carefully in preparation for your upcoming surgical visit

Welcome to St. Louis Skin Cancer Specialists! We are pleased you have chosen our team for your skin cancer treatment. Our goal is to provide you with the highest quality care in a warm and compassionate environment.

This brochure has been developed to complement the personal communication you will receive from our staff in order to better acquaint you with our facility and the process that is Mohs Micrographic Surgery. We take great pride in our staff's training and professional capabilities. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have regarding your medical care, fees, insurance, or other office policies. We care about you and want to answer all questions to your satisfaction.

We are always happy to listen to any suggestions regarding our office procedures that will improve the care you receive. It is essential that our patients are well-informed, relaxed, happy, and above all, confident in the care they are receiving. For more information about Dr. Beal, our facility or skin cancer, please visit our website: www.skincancerstlouis.com.

Canceling an appointment: if you must change an appointment, please call us as soon as possible. This courtesy allows us to schedule another patient for medical care.

Our Physician



Brandon T. Beal, MD, FAAD

Dr. Beal graduated summa cum laude from the Saint Louis University School of Business. He then attended Saint Louis University School of Medicine graduating with Distinction in Research.

Dr. Beal completed his dermatology training at the Cleveland Clinic Dermatology & Plastic Surgery Institute in Cleveland, OH.

Dr. Beal then completed a Mohs Micrographic Surgery and Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Fellowship at Zitelli & Brodland, PC in Pittsburgh, PA. This fellowship is accredited by the American College of Mohs Surgery and American Medical Association Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education.

Dr. Beal works closely with each patient to understand your concerns, explain different treatment options, and develop the best individualized treatment plan for your skin cancer. Dr. Beal believes in a collaborative approach to delivering compassionate high-quality care.

Dr. Beal is a member of the Mercy Lincoln and SSM St. Joseph Hospital medical staff.

Preparing for Surgery

As soon as you schedule your appointment:

- Please take a photo of your biopsy site with your cell phone so the site can be identified at the time of your surgery.

The Morning of Surgery:

- Please bathe/shower and wash your hair
- Eat a good breakfast
- Take ALL your medications as prescribed by your doctors including blood thinners
- Bring a list of your medications and medical history
- Do not wear makeup, perfume or jewelry near your surgical site
- Please arrive 10-15 minutes prior to your appointment time
- Please bring your insurance card, a photo ID, and your primary care physician's name and address
- Plan to be with us for the majority of the day. Do not make other commitments that day, as the duration of your Mohs surgery is highly variable.
- Wear comfortable clothing and bring a sweater as our office temperature can vary.
- If you require oxygen, be sure to bring enough of a supply to last the entire day. We do not have oxygen on supply.
- Bring snacks/beverages and a book to read. We want you to be comfortable.
- For surgical sites near the eyes, we advise you to bring a driver as swelling can obstruct your vision.
- Seating is limited - we ask you only have 1 companion
- If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at 314-834-1400, our team is happy to assist you.

After Surgery

Wound Care:

- Instructions for wound care will be provided both in writing and verbally the day of your surgery
- 48 hours of inactivity is recommended after surgery
- If your job does not involve strenuous activity you may return to work the following day

Follow-up appointments:

- Usually, one return visit one week after your surgery is all that is needed to examine the healed surgical site or to remove your surgical dressing. This appointment is provided at no extra cost to you.
- After having one skin cancer you are at a higher risk of developing a second skin cancer
- You should return to your referring doctor for regular skin checks

Protect yourself:

- Sun protection is important - both sunscreen and sun protective clothing including a broad brimmed hat
- Sunscreen:
 - Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or greater
 - Broad Spectrum: UVA/UVB protection
 - Water resistant
- You can still enjoy your favorite outdoor activities

Insurance / Billing

Please bring your current insurance card and photo ID to your visit.

It is your responsibility to know if our physicians are in-network with your insurance and to know if you will be responsible for any out of pocket expenses such as copay, deductible, and co-insurance. You can check your insurance coverage by calling the phone number on the back of your insurance card.

If there is any question about our participation with your insurance, please contact our office with your insurance information. We will help you with the insurance verification, which will help us estimate your potential out of pocket expenses.

Please know we want to be in-network with your insurance. If we are not in-network, please call your insurance company and ask them to add us to their network. Your opinion matters, as you are their customer.

Please note the following:

- We will bill your insurance carrier for you
- You will be asked to pay for services not covered by insurance. This includes copays, deductibles, and co-insurance. We accept cash, credit card, and checks.
- After 60 days, if insurance has not processed the claim, it will become your responsibility
- If prior authorization or referral is required, please contact your insurance company or your primary care provider at least one week prior to your appointment. Procedure code: 17311

We do not want anyone to be denied medical care because of financial hardship. If you have difficulties understanding or paying our bill, please contact our billing office staff.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Mohs Micrographic Surgery?

Mohs surgery is a highly specialized treatment for the total removal of skin cancer. Mohs surgery eliminates the guesswork used with all other methods of treating skin cancer. Other methods require the surgeon to estimate how wide or deep the roots of the skin cancer have grown. Mohs surgery uses complete microscopic examination of all tissues removed. This allows the Mohs surgeon to remove only the cancer cells and leave the normal skin untouched.

What are the advantages of Mohs surgery? What are my chances for cure?

Mohs surgery is the most effective surgical technique for treating skin cancer. Mohs surgery offers the highest cure rate for skin cancer, up to 99%, while also providing the best cosmetic outcomes. This is because Mohs surgery is a microscopically guided surgery allowing for (1) precise removal of skin cancer and (2) removing as little normal skin as possible.

When will I be able to return to work?

Most patients can return to work the day after surgery.

What if I have more than one skin cancer?

Usually we treat only one skin cancer site per visit. Each treatment site requires time and special attention.

What happens the day of surgery?

Your appointment will be scheduled early in the day. Our staff will accompany you to a surgical suite where we will numb the area around the skin cancer. Once it is numb, the visible cancer and a thin layer of tissue will be removed. This tissue is carefully mapped by the surgeon and taken to our laboratory where the technician will immediately process the microscope slides. You will have a temporary bandage placed over the wound and you will be free to return to the reception area.

The surgical procedure alone takes only 10-15 minutes. However, it takes a minimum of 1.5 - 2 hours to prepare and microscopically examine the tissues of each layer. Several surgical stages and microscopic examinations may be required, and you will be asked to wait in the patient reception area between stages. Although most skin cancers are removed with 1-2 stages, there is no way to tell before surgery how many stages will be necessary.

We would like to make the time you spend with us as pleasant and comfortable as possible. You may want to bring reading material, a digital music player with earbuds or a laptop to occupy your time while waiting for the microscope slides to be processed and examined. You may want to bring a sweater, as the temperature in our office varies. If your visit extends through the lunch hour, you may go get lunch or bring a lunch.

The most difficult part of the procedure is waiting for the results from the laboratory. Since we do not know in advance how much time is necessary to remove the skin cancer and repair the wound, we ask that you plan to be in the office the entire day and that you make no other commitments. Please be sure to inform your companion/driver of this as well.

What complications may occur?

Complications after Mohs surgery are rare, but may include a chance of bleeding or infection. For any complications or questions following surgery, please review the written instruction sheet we will provide to you the day of surgery.

Will I be hospitalized?

No, Mohs surgery is performed in a pleasant outpatient surgical suite and you may return home the same day.

Will the surgery leave a scar?

Yes, any form of treatment will leave a scar. However, because Mohs surgery removes as little normal tissue as possible, scarring is minimized. Immediately after the cancer is removed, we may choose:

- (1) to allow the wound to heal itself
- (2) to repair the wound with stitches
- (3) to close the wound with a skin graft or flap.

This decision is based on the safest method that will provide the best cosmetic result.

Will I have pain after surgery?

Discomfort is typically minimal after surgery. If you do have pain, alternating Tylenol with Ibuprofen has been shown to be extremely effective.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- DO advise us as soon as possible if you must cancel or change your appointment.
- DO take your prescription medication on schedule.
- DO bathe and wash your hair prior to surgery to minimize the risk of infection.
- DO eat a normal breakfast
- DO dress comfortably and bring a sweater. Our office temperatures vary.
- DO plan on being in our office most of the day. DO NOT make any other commitments on the day of your surgery.
- DO NOT consume any alcohol 48 hours prior to your surgery.

Patient Bill of Rights

A patient has the right to respectful care given by competent personnel.

Patients have the right to good, quality care and high professional standards which are continually maintained and reviewed.

A patient has the right to medical and nursing services without discrimination based upon age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, disability, or source of payment.

A patient has the right, upon request, to be given the name of his/her attending practitioner, names of all other practitioners directly participating in his/her care, and names and functions of other health care persons having direct contact with the patient.

A patient has the right to consideration for privacy concerning his/her own medical care. Case discussion, consultation, examination, and treatment are considered confidential and shall be conducted discreetly.

A patient has the right to have records pertaining to his/her medical care treated as confidential except as otherwise provided by law or third party contractual arrangements.

A patient has the right to know what clinic rules and regulations apply to his/her conduct as a patient.

The patient has the right to expect emergency procedures to be implemented without unnecessary delay.

The patient has the right to full information in layman's terms, concerning diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis, including information about alternative treatments and possible complications. When it is not medically advisable to give the information to the patient, it will be given on his/her behalf to the responsible person.

Except for emergencies, the practitioner shall obtain the necessary informed consent prior to the start of the procedure.

Patient Bill of Rights (continued)

A patient or, if the patient is unable to sign informed consent, a responsible person, has the right to be advised when a practitioner is considering the patient as a part of a medical care research program or donor program, and the patient, or responsible person, shall give informed consent prior to actual participation in the program. A patient, or responsible person, may refuse to continue in a program to which he/she has previously given informed consent.

A patient has the right to refuse drugs or procedures, to the extent permitted by statute, and a practitioner shall inform the patient of the medical consequences of the patient's refusal of drugs or procedures.

The patient who does not speak English shall have access, where possible, to an interpreter.

The clinic shall provide the patient designee, upon request, access to the information contained in his/her medical records, unless access is specifically restricted by the attending practitioner for medical reasons.

The patient has the right to expect good management techniques to be implemented within the clinic. These techniques shall make effective use of the time of the patient and avoid the personal discomfort of the patient.

If an emergency occurs and a patient is transferred to another facility, the responsible person shall be notified prior to transfer.

A patient has the right to examine and receive a detailed explanation of his/her bill.

A patient has the right to expect that the clinic will provide information for continuing health care requirements following discharge and means for meeting them.