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Dear Mohs Micrographic Surgery Patient,

We appreciate your patronage and realize that you had other alternatives, both with regard to physician as well as in regard to the therapeutic modality utilized to treat your malignancy. At Western Wyoming Dermatology & Surgery, we pride ourselves on providing the most up-to-date, innovative, and comprehensive therapies for cutaneous malignancies and their pre-malignant precursors.

Dr. Anderson has performed over 5,000 surgeries for skin cancer as well as over 2,700 procedures for benign lesions of the skin. He matriculated from an intensive training program while specializing in Dermatology and Mohs micrographic surgery of the skin. His combined experience has allowed over 50,000 patient visits to date. During recent years he has proctored numerous medical students, interns and residents while also lecturing at national professional meetings. For these reasons he will, on occasion, have a visiting intern or resident physician participate in your care. Training today's physicians helps us stay on the leading edge of medical progress.

After biopsy many skin cancers seem to get better. To the naked eye they may even appear to be completely gone. This is a physiologic response and not uncommon. It is analogous to cutting a weed in your garden. If one cuts the stem of the weed below the level of the ground it appears that all is well, however one has left the roots and with time these will regrow and resurface. More often than not, if left to their own devices, they will resurface larger and in a more aggressive fashion. The Mohs technique allows us to search out these "roots" of malignancy and be sure of their extirpation.

We realize that while Mohs micrographic surgery is a routine procedure for us, it may very well be a new and foreign concept to you as our patient. It is normal and natural to have some anxiety and apprehension. Our staff is committed to answering your questions, allaying your fears, and providing the best possible care. The majority of you will have procedures involving the face; more specifically the nose, lips, ears or eyelids. Mohs micrographic surgery is ideally suited for these areas where conservation of normal tissue is of utmost importance. Mohs micrographic surgery is reserved for those areas of cosmetic importance where destruction of normal tissue is least tolerated. It is also utilized for certain tumors and malignancies which are abnormally aggressive and tumors which occur in specific anatomic sites where cure rates with standard procedures are lower than acceptable.

When your appointment was scheduled, you should have received a pamphlet which describes Mohs technique in detail. If you have not received that pamphlet please ask the receptionist for one. As the pamphlet points out, the micrographic technique carries an exceptional rate of cure. Inherent to the procedure is the processing of the cancer after harvest for micrographic examination. This occurs while you wait and the wound is bandaged. This step in the process is the most critical as it allows for evaluation of the cut surface of the wound and microscopic guidance should tumor remain and a second or third harvest be necessary. This is also the most unpredictable step in the process and may require from an hour to three hours. Micrographic surgery is quite often tedious and repairs quite extensive. All these factors combine and make the course of the day very unpredictable. Often there are delays and long waits between harvesting of the tissue and return to the surgical suite for re-harvest or wound repair. While waiting may become monotonous and tiresome, it is essential that we do not cut any corners, or take short cuts. This ensures you and your fellow patients the best possible cure rate with the smallest possible defect, and therefore the smallest possible repair and shortest possible recovery.

Please be patient. Trust the staff is doing everything possible to move your case, as well as those of the other patients, along as speedily as is safe. If you have any questions or you are unwilling to undergo this procedure with its inherently unpredictable time frame please inform the receptionist and an alternative therapy will be discussed.

Thank you sincerely,
Christian B. Anderson, DO, Pharm D, FAOCD, FASMS