



**NORTHEAST**  
SURGERY CENTER

*State-of-the-Art Care*

[www.nesurgery.com](http://www.nesurgery.com)

Christine M. Hayes, M.D.  
DERMATOLOGIC SURGERY  
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## What to Expect Now After Your Surgery

### Weeks 3-10

- Your scar should be less apparent, but still pink and a little bumpy.
- You may experience suture reactions to the stitches underneath the skin. They will look just like pimples along your incision. You may even see a little suture poke out. The body sometimes views the sutures as foreign objects and tries to get rid of them. This is perfectly normal.
  - You can treat this reaction using a hot compress.
  - Do not tweeze a suture that starts to poke out. Simply trim with some small scissors.

### Months 6-18

- Everyone is different. Some people heal quickly and others take more time. Somewhere between 6 to 18 months your scar will settle in to what it will permanently look like. You may not be able to see it or it will be a thin white line. The location of the surgery will also affect the appearance of the scar. For example, the back scars more than the face. Occasionally, people form abnormal scars that are raised. If this happens there are simple procedures we can do to minimize the appearance of the scar.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **“I’m seeing little pimples along my incision. They are tender, and sometimes open up. What are they and how should I treat them?”**

- About 5 weeks after your surgery, your body will start to dissolve the absorbable sutures under the skin. When this happens, a small pimple swelling will appear over the underlying stitch. We recommend you apply a warm compress over the area 3 times a day for 10 minutes at a time until the pimple has resolved.

### **“What is a warm compress?”**

- A warm compress can be prepared by taking a wet face cloth and heat it on a plate in the microwave for 5 seconds. Prior to using the warm face cloth, make sure it is not too hot by testing it against the back of your hand.

### **“Why is my incision longer in length than I expected?”**

- Your surgeon did everything to give you the best cosmetic result. A longer incision prevents puckering or other distortion of the skin.

### **“I didn’t realize how involved/big the procedure was going to be.”**

- Often the procedure can be underestimated. It is more than removing the skin cancer or other lesion. It is also the repair of that area which can be a bigger surgery than one would anticipate.

### **“I still feel numb, is that normal?”**

- Yes. During surgery the nerves might be disconnected and need a little time to re-route themselves. Sensation should resolve in 1 to 6 months. It is possible that it may not return 100%.

### **“Why do I have this much bruising/swelling?”**

- Some bleeding underneath the skin is inevitable after the surgery and everyone gets some bruising and swelling. Fluid goes where gravity takes it. If your surgery was on your forehead you’re likely to get a black eye or two. With surgery close to the eye, your eye could swell shut. The skin around the eye is very prone to collecting fluid. If you are on blood thinners such as aspirin or Coumadin, your bruising could be more extensive than you would expect.

### **“Should I follow up with my surgeon for skin checks?”**

- Skin checks should be done by a general dermatologist. Everyone who has been diagnosed with a skin cancer should get regular skin checks. Please call your dermatologist to find out when they want to see you.