

Patients underestimate length of Mohs surgery scars

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(HealthDay)—Scars from Mohs micrographic surgery (MMS) for facial

skin cancers are often longer than patients expect, according to a study published online March 11 in *JAMA Network Open*.

William C. Fix, M.D., from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and colleagues measured the accuracy of patient and physician estimations of [scar](#) length prior to skin cancer removal with MMS. The analysis included 101 [adult patients](#) (56.4 percent male and 56.4 percent ≥ 65 years) presenting for MMS for treatment of facial skin cancers and 86 surgeons who performed the MMS procedure at a single tertiary referral center health system.

The researchers found that the majority of [patients](#) (83.2 percent) underestimated scar length, whereas 77.9 percent correctly estimated the scar length. The actual postoperative scar length was 1.1 times larger than the [surgeons'](#) preoperative estimate and 2.2 times larger than the patients' preoperative estimate. There was no association between improvement of patients' estimations of scar length and preoperative consultation with the surgeon, a personal history of MMS, or patient-directed research about MMS.

"Surgeons appear to accurately estimate the length of most surgical scars and have an opportunity to set realistic patient expectations about scar length before surgery," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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