

Video: Treating skin cancer with Mohs surgery

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Credit: Mayo Clinic

Nearly 5 million people in the U.S. will be diagnosed with a form of skin cancer this year, according to the American Cancer Society.

Dr. Naiara Sbroggio Barbosa, a Mayo Clinic dermatologist, explains how Mohs surgery can be used to treat [basal cell carcinoma](#), [squamous cell carcinoma](#) and some types of melanoma.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the U.S., and with

different forms and situations, there are also different treatments.

"Mohs surgery is a technique used to treat [skin cancers](#), especially in areas of the skin that are considered high-risk or cosmetically sensitive, like the face, scalp, ears and neck," says Dr. Sbroggio Barbosa.

With Mohs surgery, physicians remove skin surrounding a tumor without removing large amounts of healthy tissue. Immediately after removal, lab technicians process the specimens and place them onto slides for the physician to evaluate under a microscope.

"If we see any tumor going deeper or wider, we have the ability to go back and take more," says Dr. Sbroggio Barbosa. "We do that until there's no cancer."

The procedure happens under [local anesthesia](#) and can take a few hours, as more samples around the affected area may need to be collected and checked.

"In this way, we can spare as much as possible healthy skin, but we also guarantee the highest cure rate so there's less chance of that tumor ever coming back," says Dr. Sbroggio Barbosa.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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