



Teledermatology Lesion Clinic (QEHB) Patient Information Leaflet

What is Teledermatology?

The Teledermatology service is being provided at a local community centre where a qualified professional clinical photographer will take a series of digital photographs of your skin lesion. These photographs will be sent to a dermatologist for remote assessment to see if you need to come into hospital for further treatment. You will not have a face-to-face consultation with a doctor at this appointment.

You may have been referred from your GP or via another route to have either a single or two specific lesions photographed. If you have been referred for more than two lesions, you will be asked to seek another route for treatment or be re-referred for your other lesions via your GP. Please note, only lesions that are documented on your referral can be photographed during your appointment.

The photographer may use a professional digital camera. They will photograph a general view of the area of interest to establish the location of your lesion, and a detailed close up using a specialised lens called a dermatoscope. The dermatoscope allows the photographer to capture highly detailed images of your lesion, by pressing gently against the surface of the skin. This should not hurt.

Please note that it may not be possible to photograph some lesions using the dermatoscope. This will be explained to you at your appointment.

Once the photography is complete, your images will be securely saved and uploaded to your Electronic Patient Record. The Dermatology team will assess the report and review your clinical photographs. They will then contact you, usually within 6 – 8 weeks of your appointment, to advise if you need to come into hospital for further treatment.

If you are concerned about any other lesions or skin problems, please seek advice from your GP.

How long will it take and what will happen?

You will be asked a series of questions detailing your medical history and specific details of the lesion itself. The photographer will explain what photographs need to be taken to assess your lesion before they proceed. If you have any questions about the photography, please do not hesitate to ask.

Please note you may be asked to remove jewellery or make up where necessary. Depending on the location of your lesion, you may also be asked to remove articles of clothing to gain a better view of the area of interest. If you are required to remove clothing to show a sensitive area of your body, you may request a chaperone. This whole process will take approximately 25 minutes.

Do I need to give permission for photography?

Yes, we require your informed consent to take any photographs. As with any treatment or procedure performed on you, the clinical photographer will discuss this with you and ask for your consent to continue, which will be documented. Any photographs taken will be stored securely within your healthcare record and only accessed by healthcare professionals involved in your care.

If you are happy to proceed, we will ask for verbal confirmation of your consent to proceed with Clinical Photography. This will give us permission to take your photographs and store them securely in your healthcare records as part of your treatment. We will not take any photographs without your permission.

You may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Clinical Photography department. Clinical photographs that have been used to make a clinical decision cannot be deleted; however, your images can be retracted and hidden from viewing on your Electronic Patient Record until you give your permission for them to be viewed again.

Retracting your consent will not affect your treatment or any future treatment you may receive.

Please note that any photographs you have previously authorised for open publication cannot be retracted or withdrawn from publications already in the public domain.

What happens after my photographs have been reviewed?

After reviewing your photographs, the dermatologist may offer you further treatment and contact you and your GP with a letter about your lesion management or offer you a face-to-face or virtual appointment.

How will I find out the result of this photographic procedure?

You should receive a letter in the post within six to eight weeks of your visit, or a telephone call asking you to attend a face-to-face consultation.

If you have not heard from the Dermatology Team, or are concerned about changes in your lesion, please contact them on the following:

For patients seen at QEHB or Birmingham Dental Hospital, contact:
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham: **0121 371 5460**

In cases where an outcome cannot be determined you may be asked to:

- Be booked for a biopsy (skin sample) or the removal of the skin lesion
- Be booked for a priority face-to-face clinical appointment with a dermatologist in hospital
- Accept an invitation to have a virtual video/telephone consultation

If the outcome states there is no indication of anything serious, you may be offered:

- Reassurance and a routine follow up appointment in Dermatology - this may require photographs to be repeated
- Reassurance by clinical letter with no follow up appointment required and be discharged. If you require non-urgent treatment, the Dermatology team may contact your GP to ask him/her to arrange treatment for you.

Does an urgent follow up appointment or surgery mean I have cancer?

No. You could be asked to come back urgently for a number of reasons. Urgent appointments will generally be seen within a few weeks, so there should not be a long wait.

Can I have copies of the photographs?

Yes

Requests can be made by emailing:

SubjectAccessTeam@uhb.nhs.uk

Or in writing to:

Subject Access Team
Lincoln House Basement
Birmingham Heartlands Hospital
Bordesley Green East
Birmingham, B9 5SS
Tel: **0121 424 2286**

You will need to provide two forms of ID with your request. Details of accepted forms of ID can be obtained from the Subject Access Team.

Feedback

We hope that your visit to your local community Teledermatology centre has been a positive one and we welcome any comments or suggestions that may improve our service to you in the future.

Please do so by emailing the Medical Illustration Service Manager:
ClinicalPhotography@uhb.nhs.uk

Or by telephone

1. Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham: **0121 371 2460**
2. Heartlands Hospital: **0121 424 3429/0121 424 1220**

For further information please refer to: **www.uhb.nhs.uk/clinical-photography.htm**

General skincare advice

When should you worry about a mole?

It is important to check your skin regularly for any change. You may want to ask a family member or a friend to examine your back.

Following the ABCD–easy rules can help you identify potentially worrying features:

- **Asymmetry** – the two halves of the lesion may differ in shape
- **Border** – edges of the lesion may be irregular, blurred or notched

- **Colour** – the colour may be uneven
- **Diameter** – report any mole larger than 6mm or a change in size or shape
- **Evolution** – changes in size, shape, colour or elevation or any new symptom such as bleeding, itching or crusting.

It can be helpful to take images of your lesion to see if the lesion is changing over time as it can be more reliable than using memory alone. It can be useful to do this every few months using a phone with a camera.

If you notice any of the changes described above or are concerned about a mole or patch of skin for any other reason, then contact your GP as soon as possible.

How can you reduce your risk of skin cancer?

It is recognised that unprotected exposure to UV radiation can increase your risk of skin cancer. It is therefore important to be careful in the sun.

The British Association of Dermatologists (BAD) have compiled the following ‘Top Sun Safety Tips’ Protect your skin with adequate clothing, wear a hat that protects your face, neck and ears, and a pair of UV protective sunglasses. Choose sun protective clothing (with permanently sun-protective fabric, widely available for adults and children) if you have fair skin or many moles.

Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm when it’s sunny. Step out of the sun before your skin has a chance to redden or burn.

When choosing a sunscreen look for a high protection SPF (current recommendations are SPR 50 or 50+) to protect against UVB, and the UVA circle logo and/or 4 or 5 UVA stars to protect against UVA. Apply plenty of sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes before going out in the sun, and reapply every two hours and straight after swimming and towel-drying.

Keep babies and young children out of direct sunlight.

Sunscreens are not an alternative to clothing and shade, rather they offer additional protection. No sunscreen will provide 100% protection.

Do not use sunbeds.

Dermatology Clinic appointment contacts:

QEHB Dermatology
Tel: 0121 371 5460/5470

Heartlands, Good Hope and Solihull Dermatology
Tel: 0121 424 5000

Clinical Photography contacts:

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston Birmingham
B15 2GW
Tel: 0121 371 2460

Heartlands Hospital
Medical Illustration Bordesley Green East Birmingham,
B9 5SS
Tel: 0121 424 3429/ 0121 424 1220

Accessibility

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