

Dermatology

Teledermatology clinic: taking photographs of your skin lesion

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

Your GP has referred you to dermatology for assessment of a lesion on your skin. To give you the right care, our medical photographer will take images of your lesion. This lets a skin specialist assess the lesion more closely. They can then decide what you need to do next.

Where do I need to go?

For appointments at:

- Charing Cross Hospital, please go to the **clinical photography room**, 1st Floor, east wing
- St Mary's Hospital, please go to the **clinical photography room**, ground floor, main outpatients

Do I need to provide information before my appointment?

Yes. A few days before your appointment, you should receive a text message (SMS) with a link, from **Islacare**:

- follow the link to complete a questionnaire online

Please complete the questionnaire **before** your appointment. This is important. If we have this information before you arrive, it helps you and other patients to be seen on time.

You may be unable to complete the questionnaire online. If so, please tell the photographer when you arrive. We can help you submit your answers.

What will the photographer do?

A medical photographer will take photographs of your skin. They will photograph specific lesions your GP has asked them to look at.

They usually take two types of photographs:

- a normal photo using a standard lens
- a high-quality, close-up photo using a microscopic lens

What happens to the photographs?

We save them in your medical file. A skin specialist (consultant dermatologist) will review the images. They will decide what to do next.

Can I ask for other photos to be taken?

No, the photographer will only look at the lesion that your GP has referred you for. So, please **do not** ask them to take images of other skin lesions. We cannot check other lesions accurately without the relevant details from the GP.

How can I help get the best photographs?

You can help us get the best quality photograph and an accurate assessment of your lesion. Before your appointment, please:

- do not apply make-up over the skin lesion, as this will cover it up. If you do put make-up onto the lesion, please bring make-up remover with you and be ready to take it off
- either trim or shave any hairs surrounding the lesion
- moisturise your skin if you can. This helps with photograph quality

What happens after the skin specialist reviews my photographs?

Once the consultant has reviewed your photographs and questionnaire, you may be:

- **returned to the care of your GP with a benign diagnosis** and treatment advice if needed. Please note, we cannot offer the surgical removal of benign lesions. This is not usually offered by the NHS if it is just to improve appearance
- **asked to come back for a follow-up appointment** with a dermatologist or for further photography. This option may be chosen if:
 - further views of the lesion are needed
 - if the lesion needs to be monitored over time
- **asked to come back for a skin sample** (biopsy) or removal of the skin lesion

When will I be told the outcome?

We aim to send you a letter within two weeks of your visit. But it may take longer if specialists at a dermatology team meeting need to discuss your case.

If you have not heard from us after 2 weeks, please contact the secretary for your assigned dermatologist.

Consultants: Dr George, Dr Patel

Secretary: 020 3311 7106 / 7103 imperial.cxhdermsecs@nhs.net

Consultants: Dr Gnanappiragasam, Dr Shanshal, Dr Uthayakumar

Secretary: 020 3312 1083 / 7992 / 1194 imperial.smhdermsecs@nhs.net

Consultants: Dr Bogucki, Dr Elshimy, Dr Fernandez, Dr O'Driscoll, Dr Spencer

Secretary: 020 3313 3264 / 2402 / 2365 imperial.hhdermsecs@nhs.net

Will my photographs be stored safely?

Yes. All your photographs and other data will be kept safely, following existing NHS regulations. Your photographs will only be viewed by healthcare professionals involved in your care. We will not share them without your explicit agreement.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service, and staff will be happy to answer any questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk