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Skin Care Author: Wendy Lewis, Beauty and Skincare Columnist Last Updated: Jul 27, 2014 - 6:28:47 PM

Got a Mole? New Scarless Removal Method Uses Radiofrequency

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By Wendy Lewis, Beauty and Skincare Columnist
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(HealthNewsDigest.com) - Moles or nevi come in all shapes and sizes, and can be brown, red, black or skin color. Some people have a collection of moles on their face and/or body, and a lot of them want them removed.

During the past 30 years, Joe Niamtu III, DMD, a cosmetic facial surgeon in Midlothian, VA, has treated thousands upon thousands of moles, and has learned a thing or two about moles and mole removal procedures in the process.

"Any mole you take off should be biopsied," he says. "I tell everyone to see their dermatologist annually to make sure they have their moles checked, and that anything suspicious should be removed and biopsied."

New York dermatologist Dina Strachan at Aglow Dermatology agrees; "We recommend an annual full body skin check. Patients with a personal or family history of skin cancer, or multiple, or abnormal, moles are particularly encouraged to have a skin cancer screening." Most moles are benign (i.e noncancerous) growths of the cells that give the skin color (melanocytes). Some moles can develop into a melanoma, which may occur near or inside an existing mole. **So if you have a mole that is changing, itching, or bleeding, see a dermatologist immediately.**



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Moles can be eyesores and/or bothersome - especially those that appear on the face or neck, Niamtu says. "Many patients have come to me and their fear was that the scar would be worse than the mole, but I have never had someone come back and say, 'I would like my mole back, please.'"

The good news is that there are a multitude of options available to safely remove moles today. Many doctors will do a simple excision, meaning that they will cut the mole out and sew the skin closed. Another mole removal method involves shaving the mole off with a blade. Freezing a mole away is possible with the use of liquid nitrogen, and some doctors favor a technique that uses an electric current to burn off the upper layers of the skin, mole included. Laser mole removal is possible, but there is often nothing left to biopsy following the procedure so there will always be a big question mark about cancer risk.

Scarless Mole Removal?

Despite these options, Niamtu prefers radiofrequency technology using Ellman's Surgitron® Dual RF™ S5 system (www.ellman.com). "This procedure offers as close to scarless mole removal as I have ever seen," he says. Here's how it works: The doctor melts the mole away via targeted radiofrequency so that it becomes level with the skin surface. This energy seals blood vessels, which eliminates bleeding risk. There is no cut and no sutures needed with this procedure and the surrounding tissue is not affected. "It causes less damage than standard electrosurgery or other cutting or freezing techniques," he says. Radiosurgery is also quick, taking just seconds to remove moles. There is a specimen to biopsy after radiosurgery. Niamtu published an article detailing his experience with this technique in the June 2014 issue of the *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*.^[1]

"I tell people to come back in eight weeks after the treatment and if it's not perfect, we can do another treatment," he says. You can't guarantee 100% scarless surgery, but this comes pretty close."

Learn more about moles from the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD).
<http://www.aad.org/dermatology-a-to-z/diseases-and-treatments/m---p/moles/who-gets-types>

- additional reporting by Denise Mann

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