

Patient information

Teledermatology clinic

The West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (WSFT) is working in partnership with private provider, Skin Analytics, to deliver a service for suspected skin cancers. This service will use a computer system to assess whether skin marks or moles known as lesion(s) need to be seen by a dermatologist in the Trust for further investigation. Skin Analytics offers a faster way to diagnose skin problems, using technology to help get you to the right service quickly.

What is Teledermatology?

This service is being provided at the West Suffolk Hospital where a photographer from the dermatology department will take a series of images. These photographs will then be encrypted to hide your identity and electronically transferred to the computer programme for analysis. At this appointment you will not have a face-to-face consultation with a doctor.

The photographer will use two separate devices with a camera phone. They will photograph a general view of the area of interest to establish the location of your lesion, a close-up photograph of the 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 your skin.

To help your appointment run as smoothly as possible, please complete this questionnaire before your appointment, though this is not necessary:

<https://webapp.skin-analytics-derm.com/WSFTSkin>

How long will it take and what will happen?

At your appointment, a medical device called DERM (created by Skin Analytics) will be used. DERM works by electronically assessing a detailed image of your lesion/mole that is taken with a special lens called a dermatoscope.

The photographer will explain at the start of the appointment what they intend on photographing and how they intend on doing it. Your consent will be taken before any images have been taken. If you are happy to proceed, you will be required to give written consent for the clinical photography and verbal consent for the Skin Analytic website. You will be asked to complete a short questionnaire detailing your medical history and specific details about the lesion itself.

The images will then be taken, please note you may be asked to remove jewellery where necessary. Depending on the location of your lesion you may also be asked to remove articles of clothing to get a better view. The whole process should take no longer than 30 minutes.

What happens after my photographs have been reviewed?

DERM then provides a suspected diagnosis and what the most appropriate next steps should be for your care. If DERM determines that all of the lesions (moles) imaged are benign and it is unlikely that you have skin cancer you will not receive a further appointment and will be sent a letter confirming the outcome of your appointment with recommended actions. In all other cases, the images and medical history will be reviewed by a dermatologist who will decide on the next steps for your care.

You can find out more about DERM here [<https://skin-analytics.com/derm/patients/>].

You will be informed of these next steps through either: a letter in the post, a telephone call or a text message. The possible next steps from this appointment are as follows:

- Discharged from our care
- A call from our dermatology nurse to book surgery
- Face to face consultation with a dermatologist
- Face to face consultation with a plastic surgeon
- Face to face consultation with an oculoplastic consultant.

While we aim to be as quick as possible with our suspected diagnosis, this can take some time. On top of that getting letters to patients through the post can also take more time than expected, so don't worry if it seems as if you have not heard from us in a while. However, if you have not heard from the dermatology team within 31 days, please contact them on 01284 713549.

Does a rapid access (RA) / urgent follow up appointment mean I have cancer?

No. You could be asked to come back urgently for a number of reasons.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities, please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo)
<https://www.accessable.co.uk>



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