

Waupun woman puts her best face forward.

When Mary Schmaltz, of Waupun, noticed the crusty pink lesion on her forehead, she knew right away what it was: skin cancer. She had a similar lesion, a basal cell carcinoma, removed about a year ago in a procedure that left a small vertical scar on her forehead.

This time around, Schmaltz saw Burt Steffes, MD, a board-certified dermatologist with Agnesian HealthCare's Dermatology & Skin Care services. After assessing her lesion, Dr. Steffes told Schmaltz that she would be a good candidate for Mohs surgery, a state-of-the-art procedure that offers the highest possible cure rate for basal and squamous cell carcinoma while minimizing the amount of affected normal tissue.

Basically, a highly-trained physician removes the skin cancer one layer at a time, examining each layer as it's removed under a microscope for any evidence of cancer. When the physician is satisfied that the cancer has been completely excised, he stitches the wound together, working to minimize the appearance of the scar.

"Dr. Steffes told me, 'When we take this out, we're going to try to make this part of the natural horizontal lines on your face,'" Schmaltz says.

The procedure itself was "virtually painless," Schmaltz says.

"I expected pain and stocked up on pain reliever, but there wasn't any pain." Schmaltz also appreciates that she did not have to wait for a pathology report to tell her if the surgery had gotten all the cancer or not. Because all the tissue is analyzed on-site, during the procedure, Schmaltz walked out of the office sure that she was cancer-free.

"Dr. Steffes did a fantastic job," Schmaltz says. "Unless I point it out to them, people don't even notice my scar."



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Mary Schmaltz, Waupun, has benefitted from Mohs surgery to remove a cancerous lesion from Burt Steffes, MD, a board-certified dermatologist with Agnesian HealthCare.