

## SETTING

Clinic

## PATIENT

You are 51 years old and were overexposed to the sun in your teens. You have just had a lesion removed from your hand following a diagnosis of squamous cell carcinoma. The nurse has come to remove the stitches.

## TASK

- When asked, say the doctor told you that you had something called squamous cell carcinoma, which you think is just another name for skin cancer; you're a little worried.
- Say you have a better understanding of what squamous cell carcinoma is now. Ask if you're likely to need more surgery to remove other lesions in the future.
- When asked, say you always wear a high factor sunscreen, 30 or higher. You wear a hat when you're out in the sun, but you think it's too late because the damage has already been done; you spent too much time in the sun in your teenage years.
- Say you'll make sure to look after your skin from now on. When asked, say your wound has been fine; there's no pain or discharge but you still think it's too early to have the stitches out.
- Say you're ready to have the stitches removed.

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## NURSE

Your patient is 51 years old and has had a lesion removed from his/her hand following a diagnosis of squamous cell carcinoma. He/she was overexposed to the sun in his/her teens. You have come to remove the stitches.

## TASK

- Confirm reason for visit (removal of stitches, wound cleaning/redressing, etc.). Find out if patient has any concerns.
- Give information about squamous cell carcinoma (type of skin cancer: caused by sun exposure/ultra violet radiation, etc.). Reassure patient about effectiveness of surgery (e.g., lesion removed, cancer unlikely to spread, etc.). Stress importance of patient skin monitoring (e.g., checking for new/changing spots, regular doctor check-ups, etc.).
- Resist request for information about further surgery (e.g., patient to speak with doctor, etc.). Find out about patient's habits when in sun (sunscreen, hats, etc.).
- Stress need for ongoing prevention (e.g., continuing to cover up when in sun: prevention of further damage, etc.). Find out about patient's wound post-surgery (any pain, discharge, etc.).
- Emphasise reasons for removal of stitches now (e.g., wound healing, assessed by doctor, typically removed after 7–14 days, etc.). Advise on aftercare (e.g., keeping wound: clean, covered, dry, etc.). Establish patient's consent to have stitches removed.