

# MBS Item Numbers for Skin Procedures

## 1 November 2016 Changes

Under the current schedule which came into effect on 1 November 2016 several items have been made defunct and there are now 21 new skin excision items (previously 48). Two new restricted items for flap repair have been created. Amendments have been made to the pre-existing item numbers for flap repair so that they can no longer be used for closure of skin cancer excisions. Five new item numbers covering biopsy and excision of lesions from mucous membranes have been created. There are also amendments to items 30071, 31220, 31225 and 31340. With these changes, the list of MBS item numbers for skin procedures has been simplified and a review of the effect of these changes is planned after one year.

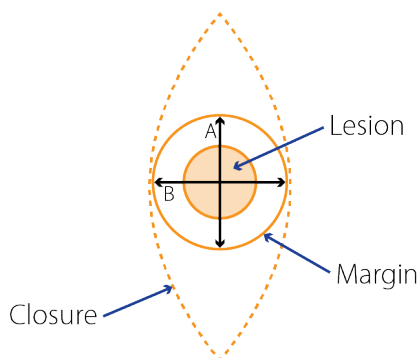
### DIAGNOSTIC BIOPSY

- ▶ This has to be performed as an independent procedure, and has to be clinically necessary to allow appropriate management
- ▶ The specimen must be sent for histological examination
- ▶ If the shave biopsy results in a definitive excision of the lesion, only 30071 or 30072 can be claimed

Procedure	Item number
Skin biopsy	30071
Mucous membrane biopsy	30072

### EXCISIONS

- ▶ All item numbers apply to surgical excisions (not shave excision) with repair
- ▶ All specimens have to be sent for histological examination
- ▶ The removal of scars excludes scars that are removed during the surgical approach at an operation
- ▶ An episode of care includes the excision and closure of a lesion, even when performed at separate attendances, and the post-operative treatment/follow-up until recovery
- ▶ Defect/excision diameter is calculated as follows:



For the purpose of items 31356 to 31376 the defect size is calculated by the average of the width and the length of the skin lesion and an appropriate margin. Therefore the necessary excision diameter is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Defect size} = \frac{\text{excision length (A)} + \text{excision breadth (B)}}{2}$$

- ▶ Item numbers for benign lesions cover benign tumours, ulcers, scars and cysts but exclude verrucae and seborrhoeic keratoses
- ▶ Excision of pre-malignant lesions including solar keratoses need to be clinically indicated
- ▶ Item numbers for the definitive excision of malignant melanoma, appendageal carcinoma, Merkel cell carcinoma and malignant connective tissue tumour of skin (31371-31376) require adequate clinical margins as per guidelines
- ▶ Excision of a malignant lesion with curative intent should be billed as such even when the margins are involved and further surgery is needed
- ▶ For audit purposes, the following should be clearly indicated on the histology request form:
  - Type of specimen (biopsy – shave, punch, incisional; excision – shave, punch, elliptical or other)
  - Defect diameter as specimen shrinkage often occurs due to tissue retraction
- ▶ The lesion size, clinical margins taken and defect diameter need to be recorded in patient notes
- ▶ 31340 is the item number for excision of muscle, bone or cartilage (one or more of), if clinically indicated, in the surgical management of a malignant tumour of skin of any size and in any location. The fee is 75% of the fee for the excision of the malignant tumour

>>> Continued Overleaf

# MBS Item Numbers for Skin Procedures

## REGION 1

Nose, eyelid, eyebrow, lip, ear, digit, genitalia, OR from a contiguous\* area

\*Contiguous\* is taken to imply a location that is immediately adjacent to the above anatomical sites, such that the excisional path would impinge on those sites.

Defect diameter	<6mm	≥6mm	≥1/3 Area of applicable site (Hospital setting only)
<b>Benign</b>	31357	31360	N/A
<b>BCC/SCC/KA/lymphoma or metastasis</b>	31356 <sup>†</sup>	31358 <sup>†</sup>	31359 <sup>†</sup>
<b>Melanoma/appendageal/Merkel/connective tissue tumour</b>	N/A	31371 <sup>†</sup>	N/A
<b>45201 FLAP</b>	N/A	Yes	Yes
<b>45202 FLAP</b> (restrictions apply)	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Wedge excision (full thickness) of lips, eyelid or ear</b>	45665, Any size		

## REGION 2

Face, neck, scalp, nipple-areola complex, distal lower limb (distal to and including the knee), distal upper limb (distal to and including the ulnar styloid)

Defect diameter	<14mm	≥14mm
<b>Benign</b>	31362	31364
<b>BCC/SCC/KA/lymphoma or metastasis</b>	31361 <sup>†</sup>	31363 <sup>†</sup>
<b>Melanoma/appendageal/Merkel/connective tissue tumour</b>	31372 <sup>†</sup>	31373 <sup>†</sup>
<b>45201 FLAP</b>	N/A	Yes
<b>45202 FLAP</b> (restrictions apply)	Yes	Yes

## REST OF BODY

Parts of the body not covered by regions 1 and 2

Defect diameter	<15mm	15 to 30mm	>30mm
<b>Benign</b>	31366	31368	31370
<b>BCC/SCC/KA/lymphoma or metastasis</b>	31365 <sup>†</sup>	31367 <sup>†</sup>	31369 <sup>†</sup>
<b>Melanoma/appendageal/Merkel/connective tissue tumour</b>	31374 <sup>†</sup>	31375 <sup>†</sup>	31376 <sup>†</sup>
<b>45201 FLAP</b>	N/A	N/A	Yes
<b>45202 FLAP</b> (restrictions apply)	Yes	Yes	Yes

<sup>†</sup>31340 excision of muscle, bone or cartilage can be claimed with these item numbers

## MUCOUS MEMBRANES

Defect diameter	≤10mm	10.1-20mm	>20mm
<b>Tumour, cyst, ulcer or scar</b>	31206	31211	31216

**MULTIPLE EXCISIONS OF BENIGN LESIONS** (Tumour, cyst, ulcer or scar), each ≤10mm diameter

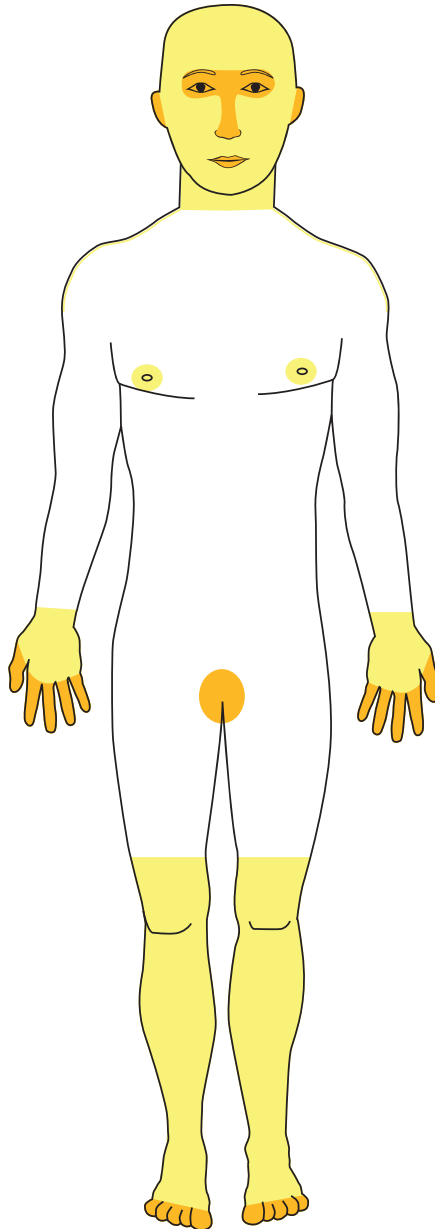
Number of lesions	4-10	>10
<b>Cutaneous or subcutaneous tissue</b>	31220	31225
<b>Mucous membrane</b>	31221	31225

## REGION 1

- ▶ Nose, eyelid, eyebrow, lip, ear, digit, genitalia or from a contiguous\* area

## REST OF BODY

- ▶ The rest of the body not covered by regions 1 or 2



## REGION 2

- ▶ Face, neck, scalp, nipple-areola complex, distal lower limb (distal to and including the knee) or distal upper limb (distal to and including the ulnar styloid)

## FLAPS

Medicare benefits for flaps are only payable when a flap is required:

- ▶ To adapt the scar position optimally with regard to skin creases/landmarks
- ▶ To maintain contour on the face or neck
- ▶ To prevent distortion of adjacent structures or apertures
- ▶ If the defect cannot be closed directly

The applicable item numbers in the non-hospital setting are 45201 and 45202, which cover muscle, myocutaneous or skin flaps (including Z plasty).

45201 can only be applied to item numbers corresponding to the larger/largest defect diameter in each of regions 1, 2 and rest of body. This number can only be claimed once per defect but an additional flap for the same defect can be claimed under item 45202, if clinically indicated.

45202 can be used if:

- ▶ 45201 applies and an additional flap repair is required for the same defect
- ▶ 45201 does not apply and either:
  - The patient has severe pre-existing scarring, skin atrophy or sclerodermoid change
  - The repair is contiguous with a free margin

## FREE GRAFTING

- ▶ 45439 applies to 1 defect, small (split skin)
- ▶ 45442 applies to 1 defect, extensive (split skin)
- ▶ 45442 applies to 1 defect (full thickness)

>>> Continued Overleaf

# Quick Guide to Item Numbers for other Skin Procedures

Procedure		Item number
<b>Definitive removal of palmar or plantar warts, &lt; 10 lesions</b>	Non- ablative treatment	30186
<b>Definitive removal of palmar or plantar warts, ≥ 10 lesions</b>	Non- ablative treatment	30185
<b>Ablative treatment solar keratosis ( ≥ 10 lesions)</b>	Cryotherapy or chemical removal Note: Benefits for treatment of <10 lesions are on attendance basis only	30192
<b>Simple curettage/shave excision/electrosurgical destruction, ≥ 1 lesions - Benign neoplasm</b>	E.g. Solar keratosis (not verruca, seborrhoeic keratosis, cysts or tags)	30195
<b>Serial curettage excision - Malignant</b>	Skin or mucous membrane	30196
<b>Serial curettage excision, ≥ 10 lesions - Malignant</b>	Skin or mucous membrane	30197
<b>Cryotherapy - Malignant</b>	Skin or mucous membrane	30202
<b>Cryotherapy, ≥ 10 lesions - Malignant</b>	Skin or mucous membrane	30203
<b>Incision with drainage</b>	Haematoma, abscess, furuncle or similar lesion	30219
<b>Lipoma removal</b>	≥ 50mm diameter and subfascial	31345
<b>Excision of muscle, bone or cartilage</b>	If clinically indicated when a malignant tumour of skin has been excised; requires histological assessment	31340
<b>Haemangioma/lymphangioma, excision and suture of:</b>	Small, skin/subcutis or mucous surface (excluding facial muscle/breast)	45030
	Large, involving deeper tissue including facial muscle/breast	45033

For further information please contact:

**Dr Patricia Renaut** FRCPA; MBBS; BSc (Hons)  
Consultant Histopathologist  
Dermatopathologist

**P:** (03) 6108 9900 / (03) 6711 2000 **E:** [enquiries@tmlpath.com.au](mailto:enquiries@tmlpath.com.au)

**Dr Debra Norris** FRCPA; MBBS (HONS)

Pathologist in Charge - Histology  
Haematopathologist (member EAHP), Dermatopathologist

**P:** (03) 6108 9900 / (03) 6711 2000 **E:** [enquiries@tmlpath.com.au](mailto:enquiries@tmlpath.com.au)