



Quick reference guide

Skin lesion excision and biopsy items—basic principles for claiming under Medicare

This guide lists the key Medicare requirements for claiming item 30071 (diagnostic biopsy of skin or mucous membrane) and items 31205–31355 (skin excision). The Medicare Benefit Scheme (MBS) item descriptors outline the histopathological requirements, size and the location. You must consider them when choosing the correct MBS item to claim.

Selecting the correct item

Selecting the correct MBS item requires knowledge of the histological requirements, size and the location of the lesion.

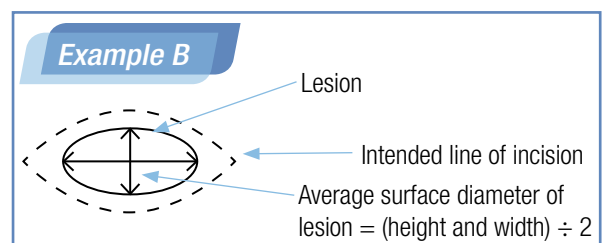
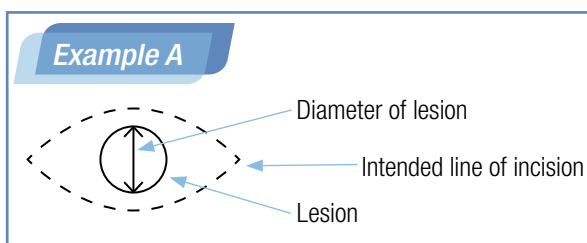
Histology

You can only claim MBS items 31205–31355 (excluding items 31245 and 31346) when you send the specimen excised for histological examination.

The correct choice of MBS item includes fulfilling the histological requirements. You must not claim a MBS item for a basal cell carcinoma (BCC), squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), melanoma or other malignant skin lesion until you have confirmed the histology of the lesion.

Size

- You should record the size and location of a lesion (in millimetres) before excision.
- You determine the size of elliptical tumour/lesion by its average surface diameter.
- The size in the MBS item descriptor refers to the size of the tumour/lesion, not the size of the excised specimen.



Location

Skin lesion excision items are grouped according to the following locations:

- face, neck (anterior to the sternomastoid muscles) or lower leg (mid calf to ankle)
- nose, eyelid, lip, ear, digit or genitalia
- body areas not covered by the previous two groups.

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Excision of malignant melanoma and locally aggressive skin tumours—items 31300–31335

Items 31300–31335 require definitive removal of the tumour. Definitive removal means that you remove a malignant melanoma or locally aggressive skin tumour and as a result no further surgery is indicated at the site of the excision.

Diagnostic biopsy of skin or mucous membrane

You can claim MBS item 30071 for a diagnostic biopsy of a skin or mucous membrane when:

- you perform the biopsy as an independent procedure
- you send the biopsy specimen for pathological examination and
- the biopsy is clinically necessary to confirm the diagnosis for appropriate management of the lesion.

Important

The rebate for the excision of a skin lesion includes all professional attendances necessary for the purpose of post operative treatment of a patient until recovery from the operation, plus the final check or examination.

We strongly recommend that health professionals refer to the latest Medicare Benefits Schedule for more information about these items, including the explanatory notes.

More information is available from www.mbsonline.gov.au

For more information

Call **132 150***

Visit www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

Visit www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/education to access other education resources.

* Call charges apply.