

Rebuilding the Nose After Skin Cancer

Bob Schultz is a retired radiologist who enjoys outdoor sports like cycling, sailing and hiking. He knows the importance of sun protection and is diligent about wearing sunscreen and hats and seeing his dermatologist regularly.

When a tiny lesion appeared on his nostril, Dr. Schultz went to his dermatologist. A biopsy showed basal cell carcinoma, a common skin cancer that isn't deadly but can become disfiguring.



His dermatologist scheduled Mohs surgery. The in-office procedure spares healthy tissue by removing the lesion and a thin margin of surrounding tissue. The margin is examined under a microscope for cancer cells. If any are seen, more tissue is removed until a clear margin is obtained.

Because Mohs surgery often requires reconstructive surgery, Dr. Schultz's dermatologist and the Mohs surgeon recommended he consult with Daniel Rothbaum, MD, at Atlantic Ear, Nose & Throat before the Mohs procedure. Dr. Rothbaum is highly trained in reconstructive surgery of the nose.

"They worked with Dr. Rothbaum on a number of cases and said, without a doubt, that's who I should see," recalls Dr. Schultz.

The probability of reconstructive surgery appeared low due to the lesion's small size. But looks were deceiving. On

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the inside of his nose, the cancer was larger. The surgeon removed tissue in four stages before a margin was clear.

"That was much bigger than any of us anticipated," shares Dr. Schultz. "I was left with a nickel-sized defect on my nose. You can imagine how stressful and shocking that is to see.

"The comforting factor was that I had an appointment the next day with the right person, Dr. Rothbaum."

Artistry in Reconstruction

"Dr. Schultz had a significant defect on the lower part of his nose," says Dr. Rothbaum. "It wasn't something just on the superficial layers but involved the underlying cartilage and internal lining. All of that had to be rebuilt so he could breathe well and wouldn't look disfigured."

As a physician, Dr. Schultz had wanted to know about Dr. Rothbaum's training, and was impressed.

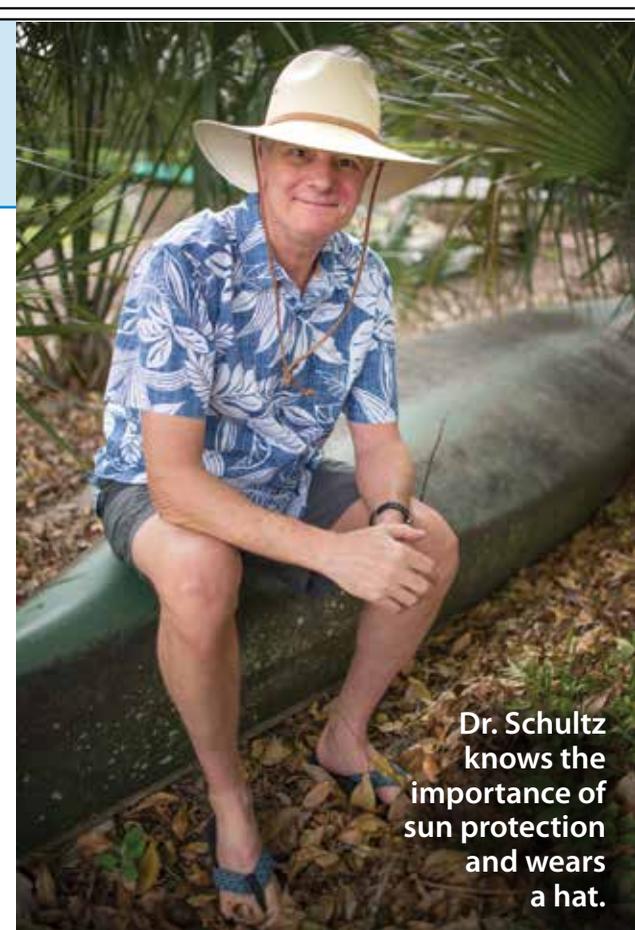
"Dr. Rothbaum is well trained by leading institutions. In addition to being an ear, nose and throat doctor, he completed further training and has expertise in reconstructive surgery of the nose," notes Dr. Schultz.

"When you meet him, he's confident and reassuring," continues Dr. Schultz. "He explains everything, so I knew exactly what was going to happen."

The reconstruction was performed in two stages. In the first procedure – the day after the Mohs surgery – Dr. Rothbaum used cartilage from Dr. Schultz's ear to rebuild the underlying nose structure, and skin from near the crease of his mouth for a cover.

"If a patient has a lesion that's in a critical area of the face, they should be aware there are specialized ways to reconstruct it," educates Dr. Rothbaum. "This is an option for patients who have large defects and want their nose or other parts of their face to look and function as well as possible."

Dr. Schultz appreciated Dr. Rothbaum's surgical artistry. The rebuilt side of his nose mirrors his other nostril. And he breathes easily.



Dr. Schultz knows the importance of sun protection and wears a hat.

"The way Dr. Rothbaum pays attention to the shadows and highlights of your nose is like he's a marble sculptor," comments Dr. Schultz.

"Working with Dr. Rothbaum was a very positive experience, and his staff is incredible," he adds. "I got a very good result."

FHCN article by Susan Hemmingway. Photo by Nerissa Johnson.



Daniel Rothbaum, MD, is board certified in otolaryngology and specializes in facial plastic surgery and otolaryngology. He is a leader in balloon sinus dilation surgery in Central Florida. Dr. Rothbaum graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College in Cambridge, MA with a degree in social studies. He received his Medical Doctorate (MD) degree from the Yale School of Medicine in

New Haven, CT. Dr. Rothbaum completed his internship and residency training at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, MD.

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