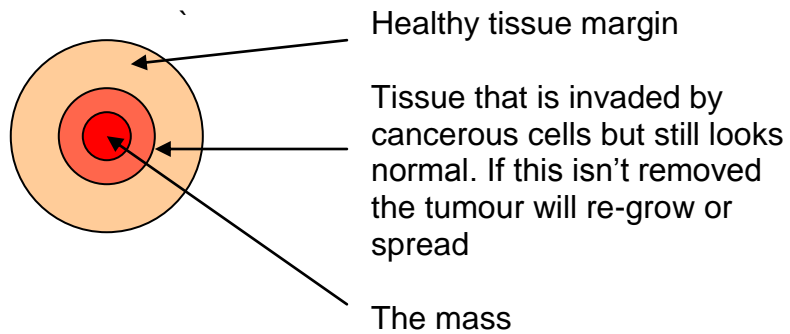


Why are big wounds and big clips needed when small masses are removed?

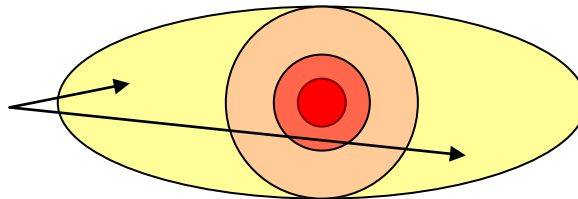
Masses may appear to have edges, but the extent of cancerous tissue can be beyond what is visible as “the mass”. This is because cancerous cells can invade surrounding tissue. We usually need to cut a “margin” around the visible limits of the mass to be sure we’ve removed any local invasion adequately. The margin that we choose to remove is decided by how invasive we expect the tumour to be.

We may need to biopsy the mass first to predict this.

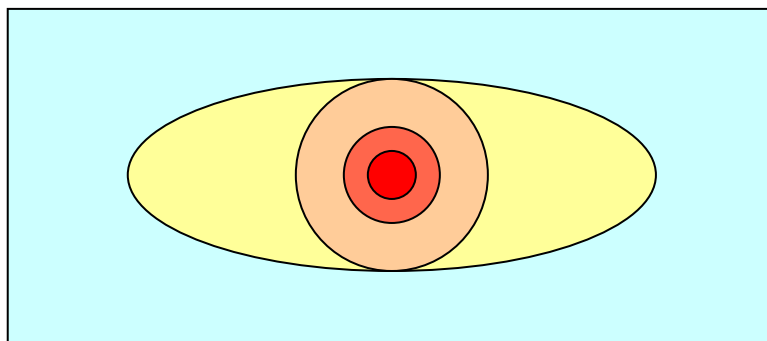


So the excised area may need to be considerably bigger than the visible mass. In addition we usually need to make the wound elliptical (longer than it is wide) to avoid puckers at the ends and to close the wound without tension. If the wound is under tension it is far more likely to break open.

Tissue removed to make closure neater and under less tension



We need a wide clip around the surgical wound to minimise infection risk.



The sutured wound should then look like this:

