

It is completely understandable to feel concerned or even overwhelmed when facing a procedure like this. While I cannot know your specific medical diagnosis, doctors at hospitals like **Peninsula Health** only perform these types of surgeries—which are technically called a **craniotomy** or a **resection**—for very specific, health-critical reasons.

Here are the most common reasons why a neurosurgical team would need to "shave" and "cut" areas of or around the brain:

1. Removing a Growth (Tumor Resection)

The most common reason for "cutting bits out" is to remove a tumor.¹ Even if a growth is benign (non-cancerous), it can take up space and press against healthy brain tissue, causing headaches, seizures, or loss of function.² Surgeons aim to remove as much of the abnormal tissue as possible to relieve that pressure.³

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2. Taking a Sample (Biopsy)

Sometimes, doctors need to remove a tiny piece of tissue (a "bit") to look at it under a microscope.⁴ This is called a **biopsy**.⁵ It is the only way for them to know exactly what is happening at a cellular level so they can provide the right treatment (like specific medications or therapies).

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3. Treating Epilepsy

If someone has seizures that cannot be controlled by medication, surgeons may identify a very specific, small area of the brain where the "electrical storms" start. By removing that tiny piece of tissue, they can often stop the seizures from happening entirely.

4. Relieving Pressure or Removing Blood Clots

In cases of injury, stroke, or a burst blood vessel (aneurysm), blood can pool in the brain (a **hematoma**).⁶ Because the skull is a hard box, there is no room for extra fluid. Surgeons must open the skull and remove the blood or a small amount of damaged tissue to stop the brain from being crushed by its own internal pressure.⁷

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Why the "Shaving" and "Cutting"?

- **Shaving Hair:** This is strictly for **infection control**. Hair carries bacteria, and since the brain is extremely sensitive to infection, the surgical site must be kept as sterile as possible.⁸
- **The "Bit" Being Cut:** In neurosurgery, doctors use advanced GPS-like mapping (neuronavigation) to ensure they only touch the exact area that is causing the problem, leaving the healthy parts of your brain as safe as possible.

Your Next Steps at Peninsula Health

Peninsula Health works closely with specialized neurosurgical teams (often in partnership with larger centers like Monash Health or private specialists). To get the exact answer for your case, you might consider asking your surgeon or neurologist these three questions:

1. "What is the specific name of the condition you are treating?"
2. "Is the tissue being removed for a diagnosis (biopsy) or to treat a growth (resection)?"
3. "How will removing this specific part of the brain affect my daily life or symptoms?"