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Subject: Weird Question

Posted by [Neil](#) on Thu, 11 Oct 2007 04:09:48 GMT

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I guess a little background is in order... for awhile now I've had this (what I and three Dr.'s thought was) an infection on my right index finger underneath the nail... tried a number of things attacking both viral and bacterial possibilities - never healed. Got referred to a different dermatologist last week & he examined it & immediately wanted to take a biopsy - lab results came back today: Squamous-Cell skin cancer. It's confirmed - he got five different opinions on it. So now I have to lose all or part of that finger.

Good news is, of course, this is nothing life-threatening or anything like that - I mean, it's just a finger, and this type of cancer is very unlikely to spread. Bad news is - well, it's what you hold the guitar pick with, so SOMETHING's gonna have to change there... i'm sure i'll still be able to play, but probably not like I can now. Right-hand stuff on the keyboard's gonna be even tougher, since that's not my main instrument to begin with, but it's what I mostly write on. Anyway, it's not like I'm losing a whole hand, I'm just a bit pissed (OK, MASSIVELY pissed) that I'm not going to be able to play anything at the level I currently am able to - in which case, what's the point?

Anyway, here's the Weird Question part: I'm going in for the surgical consult on Tuesday, and the Doc is going to give me three different options, essentially (he gave me a run-down over the phone) and what I need to decide is "How much of my finger do I want to lose?" The least-invasive is a thing called Mohs' Surgery, for which he has a specialist at his practice (whom I'll get to talk to on Tuesday). It takes off the least amount of tissue, and in the case of my particular situation, wouldn't remove any bone, either. Two other options would involve complete surgical removal of a portion of the entire section of the finger, down past the first joint, or even further.

SO... the wierd question is: Do any of you know any musicians with a prosthetic finger? Doesn't matter what instrument they play at this stage, I'm just trying to get an idea of if I have to make a choice of losing a small part of it or losing a larger part of it, which is better when it comes to a prosthesis, because I want to look into that, as well. The Doc says any of these methods would work in my case, because of where it's located & that it's still small in size & hasn't spread much, so I don't really have to be concerned

about "which one will be most effective?" IOW, I need to find out how much is not enough, how much is too much, and how much is "just right" for being able to effectively employ a prosthesis from a musician's standpoint. Might help me make a more educated decision.

Anyway, if anybody knows of anyone, that'd be great; I'd sure appreciate it. Lemme know!

Neil

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