

What is Cryotherapy?

Cryotherapy treatment is a carefully controlled cold burn, either using liquid nitrogen. It is used to destroy abnormal skin cells that require removal such as keratoses, warts, pre-cancers and some malignant growths.

The goal of cryotherapy is to freeze and destroy a targeted skin growth as quickly as possible, then allow it to thaw slowly causing maximum destruction of the abnormal skin cells while leaving the surrounding skin free from injury.

Will it hurt?

Stinging or pain may be felt during and after the procedure (this depends on the length of the freeze and the area being treated) but a local anaesthetic is not usually required.

How long will it take?

Freezing may last for 20-30 seconds. The application may need to be repeated depending upon the size of the growth.

Normal expected reactions:

After treatment, skin becomes reddened and swollen. The degree of swelling depends on the site of treatment and its duration. These changes usually last only for a few days.

In some people, particularly where the skin is rather thin and sensitive, a water or blood blister may form. It is common to have oozing of fluid before the development of a scab or crust which will heal itself in time. If a blister does form, we advise you to leave it alone as the protective skin helps the healing process. Healing may take several weeks or longer on the lower legs.

If the blister is too large or inconvenient please see your practice or district nurse who can open up the blister by pricking it with a sterile needle. This may need to be repeated until the blister no longer refills. Please do not try to do this yourself as you could cause it to become infected.

What are the risks?

Cryotherapy is generally safe but, as with all procedures, there is some risk of infection, scarring (including a white patch), damage to underlying skin and, rarely, nerve damage.

The surgeon treating you will be happy to discuss these risks further.

Aftercare

If you experience undue discomfort or pain after the treatment then you may take your usual painkillers. If you are unable to manage the pain with your usual painkillers please see your GP.

If the doctor prescribes a cream to use, apply it twice daily on any clean dry dressings. Unless instructed differently, small areas may be covered with a sticking plaster type dressing. If you have not received cream on prescription, use any antiseptic cream twice daily to avoid the small chance of infection occurring.

Once the fluid discharge or blistering stage is over, usually a few days unless the condition of your skin requires prolonged freezing, a crust or scale may form.

When the wound is dry, the skin may be washed. Make-up or other cosmetics may be applied as usual once the area is healed.

Any further queries:

Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact

Dressing Clinic

Tel: 01342 414442

Liquid Nitrogen (Cryotherapy)

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