

Liquid Nitrogen Treatment

Your doctor treated skin lesion(s) with liquid nitrogen today. This is called cryotherapy and is used for numerous conditions, most commonly, warts, actinic keratoses (precancerous lesions) and seborrheic keratoses (benign growths). Liquid nitrogen basically freezes the skin lesion and a small surrounding area in an attempt to destroy the unwanted skin lesion.

Typically, it will burn/ hurt during the treatment and continue to burn for several minutes after the lesion(s) is (are) treated. You can expect the discomfort to resolve completely within 30-60 minutes. Any residual pain or discomfort can be controlled with Tylenol, aspirin or ibuprofen.

Within 24-48 hours after treatment, you may develop a small blister at the treated site. Occasionally, a large blister, or blood blister will develop. If possible, it is best to leave the blister intact. If a large blister develops, it can be 'popped' with a sterile needle (use alcohol), but the blister roof should be left in place. This will protect the treated area, decrease the chance of infection, and help the area to heal with a better cosmetic outcome. Often, a blister never fully develops, but the area will become crusted. This will eventually peel off.

Keeping the treated areas covered with ointment (Vaseline, petroleum jelly or aquaphor) will also help to protect the area and encourage healing with a better cosmetic result. Areas that develop larger blisters that are punctured or any sores that develop should be treated with vinegar and water soaks a couple times a day (1 tablespoon of white vinegar mixed in a pint of water- soak cloth and apply to affected area for 5 minutes). This will decrease the chance of infection.

It typically takes from 7-14 days for the area(s) to heal completely. There is often a remaining pink spot that will improve with time. Sometimes, a pink spot or white spot will remain indefinitely in the treated area. Sun protection will also help the area to heal with the best cosmetic result possible.

You may wash and bathe treated areas as normal.

Remember, warts often require multiple treatments with the liquid nitrogen to resolve completely. If a precancerous lesion (actinic keratosis) was treated with the liquid nitrogen, these should resolve completely. If a lesion persists 2-3 weeks after treatment, please call our office, as you may need to be re-treated.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please call our office 205-682-8022 and we will be happy to assist you.