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Liquid Nitrogen Treatment

Liquid Nitrogen is a cold, liquefied gas with a temperature of 196 degrees below zero Celsius (-321 degrees Fahrenheit). It is used to freeze and destroy superficial skin growths such as warts and keratosis. Liquid nitrogen causes stinging pain while the growth is being frozen and then thaws. The discomfort usually lasts less than 15 minutes, although mild throbbing may be felt for a few hours.

After liquid nitrogen treatment, your skin will become swollen and red; later, it may blister. A scab (crust) will form. It will fall off by itself. The skin growth will come off with the scab, leaving healthy new skin behind. Growths treated on the face heal fairly quickly, usually in about 1-2 weeks. The chest, back, and arms take longer to heal, often 4 to 5 weeks, whereas the lower legs may take 6 or more weeks to heal. Small lesions heal faster than larger ones. If there is any severe pain or pus drainage, please notify our office.



If your growth required deep freezing, there may be considerable blistering and swelling, especially if your hands, scalp, or eyelids were treated. Sometimes, a blood blister will appear. The blisters and swelling are part of the normal treatment and will gradually heal by themselves. If a blister is annoyingly large, you may puncture it with a sterile needle and absorb fluid with a tissue. Afterward, cover with a band aid for 4-10 hours.

After treatment, if the area is open, it is possible that you can develop an infection, which would be painful, swollen, red and possibly draining pus. If you are worried about infection, please contact the office immediately. Additionally, larger lesions that require deeper freezing with liquid nitrogen could leave your skin with a white or dark spot in the area treated. We recommend strict sun protection with hats and SPF 30 or higher to minimize this risk.

No special care is needed after liquid nitrogen treatment. Just ignore it. You can wash your skin as usual and use makeup or other cosmetics. If clothing irritates the area, cover with a Band-Aid.

Many types of skin lesions, such as warts or thicker precancers, require multiple treatments to cure the spot. Please call the office to schedule a follow-up appointment if needed.

