

LIQUID NITROGEN TREATMENT

Liquid nitrogen is made from nitrogen gas which has been cooled and pressurized to form a liquid. Dermatologists use it to freeze and destroy superficial skin growths, such as warts and keratoses.

Liquid nitrogen causes stinging and a moderate amount of pain while the growth is being frozen and subsequently, thaws. Two to three freeze-thaw cycles are required to treat most growths. The initial discomfort subsides significantly within 10 to 15 minutes.

Some hours after liquid nitrogen treatment your skin will become swollen and red. Later, it may become blistered and a scab or crust may form. This will fall off by itself in 1 to 2 weeks and the skin growth should come off with the scab, leaving healthy skin behind.

If your growth required deep and extensive freezing to remove, there may be considerable blistering and swelling, especially if your hands or the area around your eyes were treated. Often, the blister will contain blood and may appear dark to bluish in color. If the blister becomes tense and very painful, you may puncture the blister with a sterile needle, which we will supply. If you do puncture the blister, cleanse the area once daily with mild soap and water, and cover it with a thin layer of Polysporin or Bacitracin ointment and a small bandage. Avoid using ointments containing neomycin (Neosporin) because they may cause itching and redness in some people. The blisters and swelling are part of the treatment and will gradually heal by themselves.

No special care is needed after liquid nitrogen treatment. You can wash your skin as usual and use makeup or other skin care products. If clothing irritates the area treated, cover it with a small bandage.

Depending upon the size and location of the skin growth you may need to have more than one liquid nitrogen treatment. This will be determined at your initial appointment or at a follow-up appointment.