



What to expect following cryotherapy (Liquid Nitrogen)

What is cryotherapy?

Cryotherapy is a technique for removing skin lesions that primarily involve the surface of the skin, such as a wart, seborrheic keratosis, or actinic keratosis. It is a quick method of removing the lesion with minimal scarring. By freezing the skin, a blister is created. Ideally, as the new skin forms underneath the blister, the abnormal skin on the roof of the blister peels off. Occasionally, if the lesion is very thick (such as a large wart), only the surface is blistered off. The base or residual lesion may need to be frozen at another visit. It takes about one to three weeks for the scab to fall off, which is when the new layer of skin has formed under the blister. Areas of thinner skin, such as the face, may heal a little faster.

- The area being treated will sting, burn, and possibly itch, and then may turn red, sore, and swollen. By the next day, a blister or blood blister will form, tenderness starts to subside. Apply a band-aid if necessary.
- Approximately 7-10 days later the surface is dark red/brown and scab like. Apply Vaseline or an antibacterial ointment, such as Polysporin, if desired. The surface will start to peel off 2-4 weeks after treatment. Cleanse the area with soap and water daily.
- Avoid applying Glycolic acids, scrubs, Retin-A, and Retinol creams for 7-10 days on the cryotherapy site(s).
- You may shower but do not submerge the area for one week following treatment or while the skin is open.
- The most common adverse effects are pain, swelling/blistering, potential for infection, and pale discoloration of the skin after it heals.
- Rarely, the blister may become infected. If this occurs, the blister becomes unusually tender, the fluid becomes cloudy, and the redness around it becomes more extensive, possibly forming streaks. If this occurs, contact our office.
- Some lesions, especially those on the face, may leave a slight pale discoloration. True scarring involving deeper layers of the skin is unlikely.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dermatology Associates of Indy at 812-401-9030.