



What to expect after Cryotherapy treatment?

What is Cryotherapy?

Cryotherapy means 'treatment using low temperature' and refers to the removal of skin lesions by freezing them. Liquid nitrogen is commonly used for this purpose.

Which skin conditions is Cryotherapy used for?

Cryotherapy is used to treat pre-cancerous skin lesions and non-cancerous lesions such as viral warts, skin tags, age spots, milia, cherry angioma and verruca.

What does Cryotherapy involve?

Cryotherapy is carried out using the form of a spray. The freezing duration depends on the area and the lesion being treated but is often a matter of seconds.

How long do I leave it between cryotherapy treatments?

We recommend 1-3 weeks between treatments depending on each person's healing process.

Care of the area(s) after Cryotherapy?

You can wash the area as normal but pat the area dry. A scab will form and will eventually drop off. A dressing or plaster is not necessary but may be advisable if the area is oozing or is prone to being traumatised or rubbed by clothing.

What are the side effects of Cryotherapy?

Immediate side effects:

Pain: Discomfort can occur both at the time of Cryotherapy and for a variable time thereafter. Pain relief taken for the first 24 hours after Cryotherapy may relieve that discomfort; also taking pain relief before can reduce the discomfort.

Swelling and redness: This is normal after Cryotherapy and usually settles after two or three days. Cryotherapy close to the eyes may induce prominent puffiness of the lower eyelids which settles within a day.

A topical steroid is applied after Cryotherapy to help reduce inflammation, except in the case of viral warts. For a short while the treated area may ooze a little.

Blistering: This is also a common consequence of Cryotherapy and blisters settle after a few days as the scab forms. Some people blister more easily than others this does not necessarily mean that the skin has been frozen too much. Occasionally the blisters may become filled with blood.

Infection: Infection can occur, resulting in increased pain and the formation of pus. This may require topical antiseptic or antibiotic therapy.

Subsequent side effects:

Scarring: Rarely, a scar may form.

Pigmentation changes: The skin at or around the Cryotherapy site may lighten or darken in colour, especially in dark-skinned people. This usually improves with time but may be permanent.

Numbness: If a superficial nerve is frozen, it may result in numbness of the area of skin supplied by that nerve. Normal feeling usually returns within a matter of months.

How long before the lesion will disappear?

Skin Tags Skin Tags should fall off within 1-3 weeks. They usually only take 1-2 treatments of cryotherapy.

Warts and Verruca Warts and Verruca take longer to disappear and require filing down between cryotherapy sessions. This can be done by the patient at home. It can take up to 6 sessions. Guidelines state no more than 6 sessions should be performed even if the wart or verruca remains.

Milia usually resolves within a week. They usually only take 1-2 treatments of cryotherapy.

Cherry Angioma usually resolves within a week. They usually only take 1-2 treatments of cryotherapy.

Age Spots (Seborrheic Keratosis) usually only take 1-2 cryotherapy treatments.