

What to Expect Following CryoSurgery “Freezing”

What is Cryosurgery?

Cryosurgery is a technique for removing skin lesions that primarily involve the surface of the skin, such as *warts, seborrheic keratosis, or actinic keratosis*. It is a quick method of removing the lesions with minimal scarring.

The liquid nitrogen needs to be applied long enough to freeze the affected skin. By freezing the skin, a blister is created underneath the lesion. 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.

What to Expect Over the Next Few Weeks?

- **During Treatment** – Area being treated will sting, burn and then possibly itch.
- **Immediately After Treatment** – Area will be red sore and swollen.
- **Next Day**- Blister or blood blister has formed, tenderness starts to subside. Apply a Band-Aid if necessary.
- **7 Days**- Surface is dark red/brown and scab-like. Apply Vaseline or an antibacterial ointment if necessary.
- **2 to 4 Weeks**- The surface starts to peel off. This may be encouraged gently during bathing, when the scab is softened.
- No makeup should be applied until area is fully healed.

How to Take care of the Skin after Cryosurgery

- A Band-Aid can be used for larger blisters or blisters in areas that are more likely to be traumatized- such as fingers and toes. If the area becomes dry or crusted, an ointment (Vaseline, Aquaphor) can also be applied.
- Cleans area with mild cleanser such as CeraVe foaming cleanser, Cetaphil cleanser or Dove soap and cool water.
- Pat the area dry with a lint-free cloth and apply an ointment(Vaseline or Aquaphor).

- Avoid glycolic acids, vitamin C, scrubs, Tretinoin (Retin-A), and Retinol creams for 7 – 10 days.
- If approved by your Provider, you may bathe, swim, exercise and otherwise follow all of your normal activities.
- The area may get wet while bathing.
- Avoid swimming or hot tub use for one week.
- Within 24 hours, you can expect the area to be swollen and or blistered.
- Within one week, the swelling goes down. The top becomes dark red and scab-like. The scab will loosen over the next weeks and should fall off within one month.