



## Information for Patients

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### Liquid Nitrogen Treatment (Cryotherapy)

Liquid nitrogen is extremely cold. It will freeze any living tissue it comes into contact with. Applying small amounts of liquid nitrogen to various skin problems is now a standard treatment.

#### What can it treat?

Warts and verrucas, skin tags, small fleshy growths and similar small 'lumps and bumps' on the skin can be suitable for liquid nitrogen treatment.

#### Is it painful?

Applications usually last about 10-30 seconds. Try holding a cube of ice against your skin for 10-30 seconds. It is uncomfortable but usually not too painful. Liquid nitrogen applied to skin is similar but colder and most people find the discomfort quite bearable. Simple, over the counter pain killers, can be taken to alleviate any discomfort or pain.

#### What can I expect?

After a treatment, the lump, wart or whatever is being treated will gradually discolour and fall off. The surrounding skin will sometimes become red and swollen and be sore for a day or so. It is similar to a mild burn. Occasionally a blister (sometimes a 'blood blister') forms. If this happens, it is best to pop it with a clean pin and apply a plaster. New skin quickly forms and any scab or blister will soon disappear. This cosmetic result is usually good.

#### Does it always work?

Usually it does. However, sometimes thicker warts or verrucas need two or more sessions of liquid nitrogen treatment over a period of a few weeks to get to the root. Compared with other treatments, most people find liquid nitrogen the most effective and the least time-consuming way of removing these skin blemishes.

#### What do I need to look for?

If you have increasing redness around the wound site and a yellow discharge, with or without a temperature, you may have an infection. Contact the surgical centre on 01726 885104 during the hours of 08.30 – 16.00 Monday to Friday. If you need medical advice outside these hours, contact NHS 111 or visit your local Minor Injuries Unit (MIU).