

### **CARE OF YOUR WOUND AFTER CRYOSURGERY**

1. Liquid Nitrogen Cryosurgery is an extremely effective treatment that uses very low temperatures (-196<sup>0</sup> centigrade) to destroy unwanted tissues like verrucae, warts, sun damaged skin and certain types of skin cancers.
2. There may be some **pain or discomfort** at the time of treatment and for a few hours afterwards. This seldom needs more than Paracetamol ("Panadol" or "Calpol") or ibuprofen ("Nurofen Syrup" or "Nurofen Plus"). Paracetamol can be taken every 4 hours but not more than 4 doses in 24 hours. Ibuprofen can be taken every 4 to 6 hours but not more than 3 doses in 24 hours. Take the maximum dose according to your age and you may alternate paracetamol with ibuprofen every three hours in the 1<sup>st</sup> 18 hours post cryosurgery if required. For more intense pain, take paracetamol and ibuprofen at the same time. Elevating the arm with a sling or a leg by keeping it 30 degrees above the horizontal (put the foot on the arm rest while lying on the couch) for 24 hours after cryosurgery in these areas will ease pain, reduce swelling and the risk of bleeding.
3. For as long as the wound is **oozing**, clean it daily with **diluted "Dettol" or salt water** (half teaspoon of salt in a cup of boiled cooled water). Wash gently, pat dry and apply **"Savlon Cream"**. Keep the wound covered with a clean dry dressing every day till it stopped oozing.
4. Once a scab has formed and there is no more oozing, leave the dry scab open to the air. Wait for it to fall off, which it will do within 2 to 6 weeks when the underlying skin has healed. If the scab is loosely attached to the skin, you can gently remove it yourself a few weeks after the treatment.
5. The treated site and surrounding skin may **swell** within a few minutes and a **blister** may develop within a few hours or a day or two after cryosurgery. The blister may be filled with clear or blood-stained fluid. If large, burst the blister with a sterile pin and squeeze out the fluid. Leave the top of the blister on the wound as it will act as a biological dressing.
6. **Bleeding** occasionally occurs and can usually be controlled by applying firm pressure on the wound for 5 to 10 consecutive minutes timed on a watch without letting go using some kitchen towel, tissue paper or clean cloth. Bleeding from the arms or legs can be further controlled by elevating the limb as high as possible and applying a firm bandage.
7. Areas frozen on the face may result in swelling of the eyelids and/or cheeks. Occasionally the eyelid will close with swelling. No special treatment is required, as it always goes down in a few days. If you have had cryosurgery to your hands or feet, please keep your limb elevated at least 30 degrees above the horizontal for the first one or two days post cryosurgery.
8. Healing time after liquid nitrogen treatment varies from 2 to 8 weeks and may be longer on some parts of the body, such as the legs and feet. Wounds occasionally get **infected** and this may cause redness in the surrounding untreated skin, swelling and a smelly, pussy discharge, with pain that gets worse rather than better as the days post treatment pass by. If you think the wound is infected, please contact the Clinic immediately as you may need an antibiotic.

If you have any worries or problems following the freezing treatment, do not hesitate to contact one of the Doctors or Nurses in the Kerry Skin Clinic. (See contact details above). Alternatively, you can contact Dr Buckley directly on his personal mobile phone 087 2541000 (**Emergencies only please** on this number).

**For more information:**

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