

The Low-Down on Freezing Warts or Cryotherapy

By Dr. Karen Prentice

What is Cryotherapy?

Cryotherapy is a method used to remove warts by freezing them with liquid nitrogen. The liquid nitrogen is applied to the wart long enough to freeze the area. A blister is created, new skin forms, then when the blister falls off the wart is gone. For bigger warts, the area may need to be frozen again at another visit.

Typically no anesthesia or pain medication is needed because once the skin gets frozen, you don't feel it. However, very small children may not tolerate this procedure.

What to Expect During and After the Treatment?

During the Treatment-- You may feel a little sting, burn or itching.

Right after the Treatment-- The area will be red, swollen and a little sore.

*Next Day--*A blister may form and the tenderness will go away. If the area rubs on things, use a Band-Aid to protect it.

*1 Week after Treatment--*The area is red or brown and scab like. You can use over the counter antibiotic ointment and a Band-Aid if necessary.

2-4 Weeks after Treatment-- The surface of the area will peel off.

How Do You Care for the Skin after Your Wart is Frozen Off?

- Use a Band-Aid and over the counter antibiotic cream for the blistered area
- Keep area clean with soap and water
- Avoid Retin-A, Vitamin C, and beauty scrubs for 7-10 days
- Swimming, exercising and bathing are ok as long as it does not cause pain from rubbing the area
- Avoid using a hot tub

If you notice red streaks, a large area of redness surrounding the blister, or your child becomes ill, please make an appointment to see your doctor.