

Liquid Nitrogen Treatment

What is it?

Liquid nitrogen is a very cold chemical used to treat skin lesions such as skin tags, warts and verrucae by freezing the cells until they die. Although it can be uncomfortable due to the 'freezing' most people find it bearable.

How is it carried out?

The liquid nitrogen is sprayed onto the lesion for no more than 15 seconds at a time until it becomes very cold and turns white.

What can I expect after being treated?

After treatment the area may become red and swollen, as well as ooze. This may last a few days. The area treated with liquid nitrogen does **not** need special cleaning or bandaging. The liquid nitrogen is not toxic and the skin should be treated the same as if you have had a very mild burn to the skin.

If it is painful you may wish to take paracetamol or other appropriate painkillers, as long as you are able to do so.

Occasionally a blister or blood blister may form. If this occurs, keep the area clean and apply a dry dressing if needed. This will eventually scab and fall off.

What are the potential side effects of treatment?

Hopefully the lesion should fall off as the inflammation settles. You may however be left with a permanent lightening or darkening of the skin as a result of treatment, and hence treatment may not be advisable for lesions on highly visible aspects of the face.

The lesion may not always resolve after the first treatment, or may recur. If so, further treatment can be offered 4-6 weeks after by again booking an appointment in Wart clinic.

Please note that most warts and verrucas will go with time and do not necessarily need treatment. Alternative treatments to liquid nitrogen for warts and verrucas include using a cream or ointment (salicylic acid) or using duct tape.