

## Cryosurgery

- Liquid nitrogen is extremely cold (-320 degrees F). When applied to the skin it causes rapid freezing and is used to destroy benign keratoses, warts, and precancers.
- After treatment there may be some burning sensation or pain for a few minutes and can last up to 24 hours. This discomfort can be relieved with extra strength Tylenol or similar pain medications.
- The treated site and the surrounding area may swell within a few hours. It often looks like a mosquito bite. Areas frozen on the face may lead to eyelid and cheek swelling. This diminishes over several days.
- Within 24 to 48 hours a blister may form which may be filled with clear fluid or blood. Over the next several days it will subside and form a crust. If the blister breaks or you choose to break it, cleanse the area daily with soap and water, pat dry, and apply Vaseline until healed. Leave the broken skin in place to act as a Band-Aid.
- Once a crust forms, it will take 2 to 6 weeks to fall off. Several crusts may form before the final crust comes off. Continue to apply Vaseline to soften the crust and promote healing.
- Avoid the use of cosmetics on the treated site until healed if possible.
- Once the final crust comes off, the skin may be discolored, but this often returns to normal after a few months. Occasionally, discoloration may be permanent.
- Call our office at (919) 781-1050 if signs of infection develop (yellow discharge, increased pain, swelling, or redness after the first several days) or if you have questions.
- In some cases, only a single treatment is needed (seborrheic keratoses, actinic keratoses). Warts often need multiple treatments.