



Liquid nitrogen is used to treat a range of skin lesions (eg seborrhoeic keratoses, solar or actinic keratoses, some nonmelanoma skin cancers, warts). It rapidly freezes the skin, producing a superficial destruction of the skin lesion.

Day 1 after liquid nitrogen treatment

The treated area becomes red and swollen. A blister may develop, and occasionally fills with blood. It is best to leave blisters alone, but if a blister is uncomfortable or extending, you can lance it with a sterile needle to deflate the blister.

Days 2 and 3 after liquid nitrogen treatment

The treated area becomes weepy. If weeping is mild, leave the skin open to the air—you can safely wash the area with soap and water. If weeping is excessive, cover the area with a dressing.

Days 3 to 4 after liquid nitrogen treatment

The treated area stops weeping and a scab forms. The scab stays for up to a week, and then the area should heal without a mark. Occasionally the healed skin is paler or darker than before—this is usually temporary, but can be permanent.

Doctor's contact details: