

If you have had cryotherapy (freezing treatment):

This treatment is used for the removal of some types of skin lesions, including seborrhoeic keratosis (harmless crusty skin growths) and simple skin tags. This requires several seconds of a very cold spray of liquid nitrogen to the lesion. It is like a cold burn to the skin surface and causes inflammation to the skin and the lesion. The lesion will drop off between 2 to 4 weeks after treatment, leaving initially a pink flat mark, and eventually a pale/white flat scar after a few months.

What to expect after cryotherapy treatment:

- It is common to feel a cold burning sensation during treatment, and up to an hour afterwards. The areas treated will be pink/red. This can feel more uncomfortable if you have had many lesions treated in one session, and this may last several days in this case. You are advised to take paracetamol after the treatment if required. Avoid friction on the treated areas as this may cause more discomfort.
- You can continue with most activities, and you can shower and pat the treated area(s) dry. The lesions may be unsightly until they fall off.
- Sometimes there is some oozing of clear colourless or clear yellow fluid from the treated area(s), during the healing period of 2-4 weeks following the treatment-if this occurs keep the areas dry for a few days. Occasionally a blister may form - this can be left alone, or if it pops keep the area dry for a few days. Rarely infection can occur.
- The lesion(s) will usually become dry, crusty, itchy, and change colour before dropping off. Don't pick or scratch, but moisturise until they soften and drop off. (Also see long term care of scars).

Where to get help:

If you have any concerns with your wound, either contact Miss Anthony by email at starclinic@drsamanthonyskin.com (primary contact) or phone the clinic on **0203 327 7777**, or your GP, or if out of hours you may need to seek help from NHS Direct by phoning **111**, or attending an urgent care centre.



- ★ See your skin lesion following referral by your GP
- ★ Treat your lesion following your consultation
- ★ Analyse your lesion in the laboratory
- ★ Report the result back to you and your GP

A GP referral service for the removal of benign cosmetic skin lesions

WOUND CARE ADVICE

*Miss Samantha M T Anthony
MBBS(Lond) BSc MRCSEd MRCGP
Associate Specialist in Dermatology
GMC Number 4631365*

*at
Centennial Medical Care, Centennial Park,
Centennial Way, Elstree, WD6 3FG
Tel: 0203 327 7777*

Website: www.drsamanthonyskin.com

Email: starclinic@drsamanthonyskin.com info@drsamanthonyskin.com

Caring for your wound after your procedure:

Wound complications are uncommon when simple skin procedures have been carried out, however it is important to look after your wound at home in order to enable optimal healing, and good scar outcomes. You may have had one or more of the treatments outlined in this leaflet, which aims to help you to manage your wound at home as it heals.

Your Procedure:

You have had a minor surgical procedure under local anaesthetic to remove your skin lesion. You have had one of the following:

a) Ellipse Excisional Biopsy:

Your skin lesion has been fully cut out and stitched. This will leave a permanent pale line scar once fully healed. There are two types of stitches:

- You have had **dissolving stitches** which do not need to be removed and will safely dissolve by themselves. There are two types of dissolving stitch: if visible on the skin surface as pale cotton threads, these will soften and fall out, and this may take up to 6 weeks. If not visible on the skin surface then these will dissolve under the skin after around 3 months. You should not notice these stitches whilst they dissolve, but it is normal to feel some lumpiness along the scar, or at either end of the scar, and this will resolve over time, and you will be advised to moisturise the scar (see long term care of your wound).
- You have had **non-dissolving stitches** which need to be removed. You have an appointment to return for removal of your stitches on at

b) Shave Excision & Cautery, or Curettage & Cautery (Scraping):

Your skin lesion has been removed from the skin surface either by shaving or scraping, and the base of the wound has been cauterised with heat to seal it, leaving a brown/black scab. This will fall off, usually in 7-14 days, to reveal initially a pink, and finally a pale/white scar once fully healed. It is like having a graze to the skin, which heals in a similar way.

What to expect, and what to look out for after your procedure:

- The area injected will feel **numb** for up to 4 hours, after which you may feel some minimal discomfort. Take Paracetamol if needed, but avoid ibuprofen or aspirin as this may cause bleeding.
- Keep your wound clean, **dry**, and covered for a minimum of **72 hours** after which you may shower and pat dry. You may then keep dressings off, or reapply, changing at regular intervals, and also if the dressing becomes wet or soiled. If you have steristrips you can leave these on until they drop off by themselves. ***If you have a cauterised scab, keep this dry for 7 days.**
- There is a small risk your wound may **bleed** any time within the first 2-3 days. If excessive, press firmly for 15 minutes and elevate the area. Once any bleeding stops you may then change the dressing. If bleeding persists please get help (see below).
- If you have had stitches you are advised not to carry out any exercise, strenuous activity, heavy lifting, bending, or swimming for 4 weeks, and if your wound is on the leg take care with driving, to prevent **infection** or the **wound coming apart** (particularly wounds on the leg, back or near joints).
- **Signs of infection** are a red/hot/swollen/painful/discharging wound. If any of these occur please get help (see below) as you may need antibiotics.
- If you have a wound on the head, face, or near the eye, you may get swelling or bruising for several days. You should avoid bending, and sleep propped up to help reduce this.

Long term care of your scar:

All scars are permanent. For best scar healing you are advised to moisturise your scar: start 7 days after your procedure on the head, face, or neck, after 14 days if below the neck, ideally with vaseline or Bio-oil, or any other moisturiser. Do this twice a day, gently for the first 4 weeks, after which you can firmly massage the scar with your moisturiser using circular motions, and continue for several months. Avoid exposing your scar to direct sunlight for 12 months as this can cause permanent discoloration, and prevent the scar from fading. Use sunblock SPF 50+ and shade. Scars can take 12-18 months to finally settle.