

Caring for your cryotherapy wound

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Introduction

There is no single best way to care for a surgical wound, although research and technology allow us to advise and modify wound care for individual patients. In most cases, cryotherapy wounds require little specific care.

Immediate post operative care

The wound will be red and swollen for a few hours after the cryotherapy treatment. The redness and swelling will begin to settle after this, although the treated area may sting for several days. Areas of sensitive skin such as around the eyelids may remain swollen for longer.

Washing the wound

You should wash the wound as follows:

- Have a normal shower (or bath) allowing the wound to get wet
- Do not scrub the wound
- Use plain water, or, if prescribed, a prescribed cleanser: avoid tcp/dettol or savlon
- Dry the skin gently with clean towel
- Apply plain Vaseline to the wound, or a prescribed ointment
- Dress the wound as directed - see below

Dressing the wound

Cryotherapy wounds generally only need to be dressed with a moisturizer or a plain ointment such as Vaseline. If you are going in intense sunlight, it may be better to apply moisturizing sunscreen over the area.

A physical dressing is only required should the treated area form a blister. In this situation, the blister can be covered with some plain Vaseline and a clean surgical plaster (e.g. Elastoplast or Band-Aid).

If a blister forms in awkward areas, wounds such as the scalp, eyelids or genitals may simply use an ointment as a dressing, instead of a plaster. This should be applied several times daily to prevent the wound from drying up. Either use Vaseline or a prescribed ointment.

What to expect...

Your wound will initially be red, then become swollen over a period of a few hours after the cryotherapy. This swelling may take about 2-4 days to settle but can take longer. Usually, the area to be treated (e.g. a warty growth or skin tag) will fall off in 2 – 3 weeks, long after the original redness has settled. Occasionally, the treated

area can appear to be a lighter skin colour than the surrounding skin (this can sometimes be permanent).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the clinic where you were treated or Dr. Bashir's secretary. Out of hours, please contact your GP or NHS direct if you need urgent care.