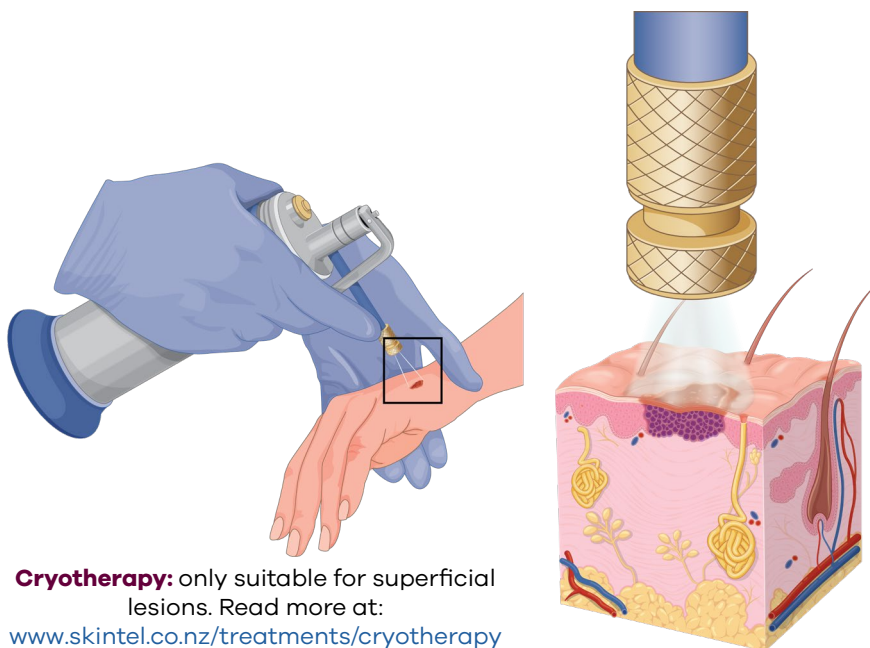


# Cryotherapy

**Skintel** Precision Skin Cancer Care

If you have any concerns regarding your treatment, please contact your care team.

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**Cryotherapy:** only suitable for superficial lesions. Read more at: [www.skintel.co.nz/treatments/cryotherapy](http://www.skintel.co.nz/treatments/cryotherapy)

## Cryotherapy involves freezing and destroying a skin growth with liquid nitrogen.

A range of conditions can be treated with cryotherapy, including actinic keratoses, seborrhoeic keratoses, warts, superficial skin cancers and many others. During cryotherapy, tissue is not removed so it isn't sent to the laboratory for analysis.

The depth of the freeze will depend on the lesion being treated. Benign and pre-cancerous lesions will need a relatively superficial freeze, whereas superficial skin cancers require more significant freezing (often called cryosurgery) to ensure that the cancer is treated adequately. It requires a longer application of liquid nitrogen, to destroy the skin cancer to a depth of 2-3 mm or more.

In some cases you may need to return for a further treatment.

## Treatment/Recovery Process

**At the time of treatment:** it will sting when treatment is being applied and for some minutes afterwards.

**Minutes / hours after treatment:** The treated area will turn red and start to swell.

**Hours/days:** The treated area will usually blister. Leave the blister intact as it forms a sterile cover for the healing wound and in time will breakdown. The area may weep and ooze for several days following treatment, but this can vary.

When the wound breaks down, apply white soft paraffin (WSP or Vaseline) using a clean cotton bud. The use of WSP will minimise crust formation and may improve healing.

Although not necessary, you can cover the area with a dressing. An adhesive dressing with a non-stick central pad is usually best and can be obtained from most pharmacies.

**Superficial cryotherapy** takes about 5-14 days to heal and can leave a discoloured area which often resolves. There is a small risk of scarring, but the risk depends on the depth of freezing.

**Cryosurgery** sites (i.e. deep freezing) usually take 4-6 weeks to completely heal and will leave a pink patch that eventually transitions to a pale scar. Lesions treated on the leg can take longer to heal.

## Complications

Other than initial discomfort in the first few days following treatment, the wounds should not be painful.

If the wound becomes red, swollen, or hot to touch, it may indicate that the wound is infected. If this occurs, please contact your care team for further advice.

If the lesion recurs you may need further treatment with cryotherapy or an alternative treatment.

## Notes