



POST LIQUID NITROGEN CARE FOR ACTINIC KERATOSES

WHAT TREATMENT WAS PERFORMED TODAY?

You had one or more actinic keratoses treated with cryotherapy (also called liquid nitrogen or freezing).

WHAT ARE ACTINIC KERATOSES (AK'S)?

Actinic Keratoses are pre-cancerous spots that are most often found on sun-exposed skin and result from too much sun over your lifetime. Left untreated, they can turn into skin cancer (squamous cell or basal cell carcinoma).

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER THIS TREATMENT?

The discomfort you are experiencing will most likely subside in 10-15 minutes.

- Areas treated will probably blister. If the blisters are uncomfortable, you may pop the blister, but do not pull off the skin.
- One to two times a day, gently clean areas with mild soap and water, pat dry and apply a small amount of antibiotic ointment or Vaseline to each spot treated. Do this until the treated sites are completely healed.
- Vinegar soaks may be helpful for healing and reduction of risk of infection. Instructions are below.
 - 1 Tbsp white vinegar in 1 pint warm water; soak with soft cloth or gauze for 10-15 minutes; pat dry; apply ointment and bandage; repeat 1-2 times daily until healed.
- For any discomfort, you may take Tylenol.
- Watch for any signs of infection such as unusual redness, swelling, pain, tenderness or yellow drainage. If any of these should occur, please message us on Klara or call the office at 205.877.9773.

HOW SHOULD I MONITOR FOR NEW AK'S OR THOSE RECURRING AFTER TREATMENT?

AK's are typically skin-colored to pink spots on sun-exposed skin. They are most often scaly or rough like sandpaper. Often they are sensitive to touch, but they may have no symptoms. If you suspect a new or recurring AK, make an appointment to come see us. Occasionally an AK progresses to skin cancer even after it's treated, so self-monitoring is very important.

(CONTINUED ON THE BACK)

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WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT MORE AK'S FROM FORMING?

Sun protection is important. Wearing a broad spectrum SPF of 30+ daily throughout the year is recommended. Sun avoidance during the hottest part of the day is also helpful, as well as sun protective hats and clothing. Topical retinoids (tretinoin, RetinA, and physician-grade retinols) may be helpful in reducing and preventing AK's.

Heliocare is an oral antioxidant supplement that may help reduce sunburn and sun damage when taken as directed. This product is over-the-counter and available in our skincare boutique. Heliocare is NOT a replacement for sunscreen, but should be used to enhance the protection that sunscreen offers.

WHAT ARE OTHER WAYS OF TREATING AK'S?

While freezing is the most common treatment, there are prescription topical treatments that are appropriate in some cases. Also, Photodynamic Therapy (also called "Blue Light") may be an effective treatment for some patients. This is typically recommended when there are numerous AK's in a certain area like the face, chest or arms. Not all insurance policies cover Photodynamic Therapy.

Thank you for trusting us with your skin health. We consider it an honor and a privilege to treat you.

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