



CRYOSURGERY OR ELECTRODESICCATION

Cryosurgery or electrodesiccation may be the treatment of choice for many skin lesions whether benign, pre-cancerous, or malignant. In the hands of a skilled dermatologist, these methods deliver high cure rates with little scarring for properly selected lesions.

Cryosurgery utilizes liquid nitrogen and consists in lowering the skin temperature to 196°C , below the level that permits cells to recover. Because most cancer cells are more susceptible to damage by cold than the cells that heal the skin, it is possible to kill a tumor without causing much of a scar; hence, good cosmetic results.

Electrodesiccation works by heating the cells to remove water and thus destruction. Because it can be done very precisely (the size of a small spark jumping from a needle tip), many dermatologists choose this method for the cosmetic destruction of smaller lesions such as skin tags (fibroepitheliomas), cherry angiomas, seborrheic keratoses, and warts (verrucae vulgaris). The electrical unit is often called a Bovie® or Hyfrecator®.

Either method is useful in treating unwanted lesions, both medical and cosmetic, and both can give good cosmetic results. For example, some dermatologists successfully recommend a type of peel done with special cryosurgical equipment for rejuvenation purposes; others will competently eliminate a skin cancer, fairly bloodlessly, by electrodesiccation.

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