

## **ELECTRODESICCATION**

### **What is Electrodesiccation?**

Electrodesiccation is the destruction of abnormal tissue with a high-frequency electric current delivered via a needle-shaped electrode. Most benign skin growths such as seborrhoeic keratosis ("age spot"), viral wart, skin tag, as well as certain cancerous skin growths such as Bowen's disease can be treated with electrodesiccation.



Depending on the condition, a numbing cream or injection of a local anaesthetic will be applied. A nurse will apply the numbing cream over the growth(s) about an hour before the scheduled electrodesiccation procedure. If local anaesthesia is given, a doctor will inject it in and around the area.

Sometimes, curettage (scraping using a sharp disposable instrument) may also be performed to quickly remove the bulk of the growth.

An antiseptic ointment or gel will then be applied onto the wound.

### **What are the risks and complications of the procedure?**

Bleeding may sometimes occur. Apply firm constant pressure for ten minutes; the bleeding will usually stop. Itch is common. Avoid scratching to prevent scarring.

Wound infection is an uncommon complication. This can be prevented by keeping the wound clean and applying the topical treatment prescribed regularly.

In place of the growths that have been removed by electrodesiccation, there may be an area of pigmentation which generally fades with time. The surface of the skin may become slightly indented, or rarely develop a keloid.

### **How can I take care of the wound?**

- Apply the antiseptic ointment or gel regularly.
- You may shower as per normal but avoid rubbing or scrubbing the wound. Gently pat it dry with a soft clean towel after shower.
- You may take painkillers (eg paracetamol) for relief of pain

### **When to seek further treatment?**

Seek medical consultation with your doctor or general practitioner if any of the following conditions occurs:

- Fever of 38°C and above
- Redness, warmth, swelling and foul-smelling discharge from the treatment site
- Severe bleeding from the wound
- Severe pain that is not relieved by pain medication

