

Aesthetic Complications Expert Group Cryolipolysis (Fat Freezing)





Patient Information Leaflet

Cryolipolysis (Fat Freezing)

When considering **Cryolipolysis** treatment, we want you to have a safe treatment. Some risks are unavoidable and out of your control, but the following information should allow you to know what to expect and what you should ask of your practitioner.

What is Cryolipolysis?

Cryolipolysis was first reported in 2008 and is a relatively new technology for non-surgical fat reduction. The term refers to the destruction of fat cells by freezing. It is based on the principle that fat cells in the body are destroyed by low temperature whereas the skin is somewhat resilient when the precise suction, temperature and exposure are controlled. Cryolipolysis can destroy up to 40% of fat cells within the treated area and create some tightening of the skin. It is ideal for removing limited amounts of body fat particularly on the stomach, flanks, thighs and back. Cryolipolysis may be used in combination with other treatments to achieve optimum results.

Key Points:

- ✓ Cryolipolysis is considered a safe and effective treatment for small pockets of fat
- ✓ Treatment takes about an hour although results are not apparent for 2 – 4 months

- ✓ Repeat treatments can be performed after a few weeks or it can be combined with other treatments to enhance results

How does it work?

The cryolipolysis procedure involves the use of an applicator that delivers a gentle vacuum pressure that draws up tissue between cooling panels which create sub-zero temperatures (Generally between -4 to -10°C). This low temperature causes thermal damage to fat cells without causing damage to the skin or subcutaneous tissue. The treated fat cells are removed through natural metabolic processes within the body over time allowing a gradual reduction in fat from targeted areas to create a slimmer, more defined appearance. The procedure generally takes about 30 – 60 minutes to perform and more than one treatment may be required, or it may be combined with other treatments to achieve the best results. The interval between repeat cryolipolysis treatments is generally a minimum of 6 weeks, although different body areas may be treated within this time.

What areas can be treated?

Cryolipolysis is best applied to superficial fat pockets and best described as sculpting and refinement for those wishing to target stubborn areas of concern. It is not suitable for general weight loss.

- ✓ Stomach
- ✓ Love handles/Flanks
- ✓ Muffin tops
- ✓ Back fat
- ✓ Thighs
- ✓ Arms/Bingo wings
- ✓ Double chin
- ✓ Buttocks
- ✓ Knees



Does it hurt?

During treatment, the skin is cooled to below freezing point and even though the skin may feel cold initially, mostly the skin will feel numb and pain free. If you do experience any discomfort, inform your practitioner during treatment as this may indicate that the vacuum has not been applied correctly.

What can I expect after treatment?

When the device is removed, the treatment area may feel solid or slightly frozen and have taken on the shape of the treatment applicator. Massage may be applied but this will return to its normal appearance within a few minutes. The skin will initially feel very cold and be pink or red. There may be some aching, spasm, tenderness or altered sensation for the first few

days, but normal activities can be resumed immediately. Cryolipolysis has been clinically proven to remove up to 40% of fat cells after one treatment. Compared to other fat reduction treatments, cryolipolysis has very little downtime, no need for anaesthesia, no incisions and no difficult aftercare such as exercise or having to wear compression garments.

You should aim to drink a litre of water before treatment and to maintain good hydration and fluid intake over the next few days to aid elimination of fat. You can resume your normal activities straight away following treatment. Most people will achieve a noticeable and satisfying improvement over time, however like many body treatments, some people do respond better than others.

How long will it last?

Although the fat loss achieved is permanent as the target fat cells have been destroyed, the remaining fat cells may increase in size or number and replace any loss that has been obtained. It is recommended to follow a healthy lifestyle, diet and exercise to maintain the results. This treatment is not a substitute for a calorie-controlled diet and lifestyle modifications.

Is it safe?

All treatments carry a degree of risk. All risks and complications will be discussed with you at consultation and prior to any treatment being agreed.

Fat freezes before the skin does, so there is little risk of damage to the skin.

Side effects include, but may not be limited to:

- ✓ Redness
- ✓ Pain or tenderness
- ✓ Bruising
- ✓ Altered sensation or sensitivity in the treated area
- ✓ Occasionally a rash may develop which can last several days
- ✓ Very rarely, the skin may become burnt due to frost damage which could result in a scar
- ✓ Uneven results, which may be permanent and require further intervention



If you develop any complication, it is essential to seek urgent advice as soon as you are aware of a problem.

Am I suitable for treatment?

There are several medical conditions and medications that may mean you are not suitable for treatment. A full medical history and assessment of your condition is necessary in advance of any decision to treat.

The following may mean you are not suitable for treatment:

- ✓ Pregnancy or breastfeeding
- ✓ Infection or inflammation at the treatment site
- ✓ Skin conditions or suffer from rashes in the cold
- ✓ Systemic illness, including coughs or colds
- ✓ Immunosuppression (due to a medical condition or medication)
- ✓ Receiving chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- ✓ Uncontrolled diabetes
- ✓ Under the age of 18 years
- ✓ Chronic disease, including diseases affecting the kidneys or lymphatic system
- ✓ Peripheral vascular disease or Raynaud's disease
- ✓ Pacemaker or metal implant near the site where you are having treatment
- ✓ Body dysmorphia or mental illness

Vigorous exercise, sun exposure, sun beds and saunas should be avoided for 48 hours, or as advised by your practitioner after treatment.

Choosing your practitioner

Ensure you know the following information:

- ✓ The full name of the practitioner who is treating you
- ✓ Their qualification (doctor, dentist, registered nurse or other)
- ✓ Contact details (address, telephone and email)
- ✓ An emergency contact number for out of normal office hours



These are essential should you have a complaint or a problem and need to escalate it to any external authority.

Practitioners are accountable to the standards of their regulatory bodies, you can check their registration and they must hold indemnity insurance for the treatments and services they provide.



Summary Checklist

What to expect

- ✓ To have a face to face consultation with a practitioner/therapist prior to treatment who is experienced in the procedure
- ✓ To have enough time to consider all the information – avoid making hasty decisions
- ✓ A follow up appointment if necessary or desired

Ask questions

- ✓ What is this treatment/device used?
- ✓ How does it work?
- ✓ What are the side effects/risks?
- ✓ What are the alternatives I might consider?
- ✓ What results can I expect?
- ✓ What will I look like immediately after?
- ✓ How long will the results last?
- ✓ How many treatments will I need and in what time frame?
- ✓ Are you able to treat complications, should they occur?
- ✓ What happens if I am not happy with the result?
- ✓ Is it painful? How do you minimise pain?
- ✓ What aftercare am I expected to perform?
- ✓ What will it cost and what are the payment terms?

What to check

- ✓ Check the qualifications of a practitioner/therapist prior to treatment
- ✓ Ensure they have appropriate insurance and ask for evidence of this
- ✓ Ask for a copy of your treatment record, should you later see another practitioner.

Be Safe

- ✓ Do not proceed with treatment if you do not feel comfortable with the practitioner/therapist
- ✓ Do not proceed with treatment if you do not fully understand the information you are given
- ✓ Take the necessary time to make your decisions
- ✓ Make a note of the practitioner or therapist's name
- ✓ Ask for copies of before and after photographs for your reference
- ✓ Do not have treatment in your home, at 'parties' or exhibitions or in environments that are clearly not clean or appropriate