

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to compare the use of phenol and liquid nitrogen cryotherapy in nail matrix cautery following partial nail avulsion with a view to finding an effective alternative to phenolisation which utilises equipment available in clinic. A total of 19 patients were included in the study. Each patient required partial nail avulsion of both sides of at least one toe nail. A standard post-operative management regime was instigated. Information was recorded on healing rate, pain, ease of use, recurrence rate, cosmesis and cost comparison. Any complications were noted. The results indicated that both methods produce a successful outcome with similar healing rates and minimum reported pain. There were no post-operative infections. Two patients presented with asymptomatic regrowth at their final review, both of which occurred in the areas treated by liquid nitrogen. All patients were satisfied with the end result. The results showed that the two methods resulted in different patterns of healing. It may be that the use of liquid nitrogen should be followed by a more appropriate post-operative regime rather than that used following phenolisation and suggestions have been made regarding this. Further study could investigate the effectiveness of this new regime.

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