

UVB Light Treatment

Dermatology

Patient Information Leaflet

Following your consultation, you have been referred for UVB light therapy. Below are some questions frequently asked by our patients. The answers will help you understand this form of treatment.

What is UVB?

UVB is a form of ultra violet light that comes from the sun. UVB phototherapy involves the use of fluorescent tubes within a cabinet. Very precise wavelengths are calculated and administered. These have been found to benefit a variety of skin conditions.

How long will my course of treatment last?

It will be necessary for you to attend 3 times a week for approximately 8 weeks. Treatment days are on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. Please try to be prompt as appointments are spaced at 15 minute intervals and arriving late may result in you losing your appointment.

What does my treatment involve?

On your first visit, the phototherapy nurse will assess your skin. You will be asked a few simple questions concerning your skin. The light therapy procedure will then be explained and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions. Once you are inside the treatment cabinet, a carefully measured dosage of UVB light will be administered. You will be supplied with dark goggles to wear whilst in the cabinet to protect your eyes. If your condition does not affect your face, you may also be asked to wear a full face visor.

The first treatment will last only a few seconds, but this will usually increase at each visit as your skin is able to tolerate the light. The machine is quite bright and you may feel warm, but it will not hurt. Let us know if you feel uncomfortable.

What do I need to wear?

You should wear dark coloured underwear and you must wear the same style throughout the treatment course, as once the area has been

shielded from the light, any sudden exposure to the light may cause sunburn to that area. Female patients may remove all clothing, but males must protect their genitalia. Prior to attending avoid applying cosmetics, perfumed substances, or aftershave, as these can cause the skin to be sensitive to the light.

Are there any side effects to UVB treatment?

It is possible that during the course of light treatment you may experience a mild sunburn reaction. Should this happen, frequent applications of a water based moisturiser should soothe the skin and reduce the redness.

Very occasionally, patients develop Polymorphic Light Eruption. This is an itchy rash caused by sunlight

Other possible side effects are skin dryness and increased itching. Again, these can be alleviated with frequent applications of a moisturiser. Occasionally, if the itching becomes severe, it may become necessary to prescribe an antihistamine. Please discuss any side effects, however slight, with the Phototherapy nurse who will advise you on the best course of action.

What are the long term risks of UVB treatment?

Patients who are given repeated doses of light treatment, or who have been receiving light treatment for a prolonged period of time, are at greater risk of premature skin ageing and the development of skin cancers. Every effort is made to minimise these risks by carefully monitoring the amount of exposure you receive and the number of doses given.

Will sunbathing help speed up my treatment?

No. It is extremely important to avoid sunbathing, or using commercial sun beds during your course of treatment, as you will increase the risk of burning. On bright sunny days, it will be necessary to cover the areas normally exposed to sunlight, with clothes or high factor sun cream.

Should I stop using my topical treatments?

The phototherapy nurse will discuss your topical treatments with you. Some creams and ointments could make your skin more sensitive than usual to the light treatment. Please inform the nurse of any creams or ointments that you have been prescribed.

Should I continue taking my current medication?

Some medication could make your skin more sensitive than usual to the light treatment. It is therefore advisable to inform the nurse of any medication you are currently taking.

Is UVB safe during pregnancy?

Yes. This type of light therapy is safe during pregnancy. If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to discuss these with the phototherapy nurse.

If you are unable to attend your appointment, please contact the Phototherapy room:

Lancaster Royal Infirmary **Tel:** (01524) 583167
Furness General Hospital **Tel:** (01229) 403741

If the Phototherapy nurse is not available, please leave a message on the answer machine.

If you regularly fail to attend your appointments without informing the Phototherapy nurse, it may be necessary to cancel your course of treatment.

Leaflet Details

Approved by: PD & ILG
Date of Publication: 19/12/2014
Reference Number: PIL/005 v.2
Author: Karen Dowswell
Review Date: 01/12/2019



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If you would like to receive this information in an alternative format, then please contact : 01539 795497.

Travelling to our hospitals

For the best way to plan your journey visit our website: <http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 01539 795497.

Useful Contact Details

NHS 111 (for 24 hour urgent health advice): telephone 111

Your Information

If you would like to know how we use, share, disclose and secure your information and your rights of access to the information we hold about you, visit the Trust's website: <http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01539 795497.

Evidence

Details of the evidence used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: Patient Information Officer at 01524 512476.

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment, please speak to a member of staff or contact PALS on 01539 795497.

UHMBT is a no smoking Trust. Smoking is not permitted on any of the hospital sites. You can contact the NHS North Lancashire Stop Smoking services on the number below:

NHS Quit Squad - **0800 328 6297**

If you live in Cumbria, please call **0300 013 3000** to find a local pharmacy who are offers 1-2-1 support and nicotine replacement therapy.

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