

PHOTODYNAMIC THERAPY

PATIENT INFORMATION:

PATIENTS ARE REQUIRED TO PRINT THIS INFORMATION OUT AND SIGN THE LAST PAGE AS INDICATED BEFORE HAVING THEIR PDT TREATMENT

WHAT IS PHOTODYNAMIC THERAPY (PDT)?

Photodynamic therapy (PDT) is a treatment that uses light and a medicine (in a cream) applied to the skin to kill pre-cancer and early cancer cells.

WHAT IS PDT USES TO TREAT?

- Actinic keratosis. These are **precancerous** skin changes caused by years of sun exposure
- Diffuse actinic squamous dysplasia. This term describes skin with a **lot of sun damage** and often a history of skin cancer
- Bowens disease – squamous carcinoma in situ. This is **early skin cancer**.
- Superficial Basal cell carcinoma. A **skin cancer confined to the upper layers of the skin**

WHAT ARE OTHER TREATMENTS BESIDES PDT?

- Chemotherapy cream - EFUDIX
- Immunotherapy cream - ALDARA
- Electrodesiccation and Curettage - cancer is cut out from the skin and the area is treated with and electric current to stop bleeding and kills cancer cells
- Cryotherapy - FREEZING of abnormal cells with liquid nitrogen
- Chemical peel - SOLUTION put onto the skin that causes it to peel off
- Excision - Moh's surgery or Standard EXCISION

DISCUSS THE VARIOUS OPTIONS WITH YOUR DOCTOR TO DECIDE WHICH TREATMENT IS BEST FOR YOU

GETTING READY FOR TREATMENT

Tell your doctor

- if you or anyone in your family is very sensitive to sunlight
- If you or anyone in your family has porphyria
- If you are or planning to fall pregnant soon
- If you are breastfeeding
- If you are taking ANY medication (including supplements and homeopathic medication)
- If you have any allergies to drugs

ON THE DAY OF THE TREATMENT

- Do not wear make-up, lotions, perfumes
- Take your usual medication unless told not to
- Bring sun protective gear – broad rimmed hat, sunglasses, umbrella and long-sleeved shirt. **Your skin will be sun sensitive after the treatment!**
- Bring a sunscreen that contains Zinc Oxide and titanium oxide SPF50+
- Bring a book, magazine or personal music player to help pass the time. Your appointment will last 2-3 hours

ABOUT THE TREATMENT

- The treatment area will be cleaned
- Then the treatment cream (ALA) will be applied to your skin
- You will be told to wait (usually 1-1 1/2 hours) for the medicine to take effect on the abnormal skin cells
- Once the ALA cream has been applied, your skin will be sun sensitive and you must avoid any exposure to sunlight and other forms of bright light for 36 hours.
- You will wait in a softly lit area.
- The ALA will then be removed and a numbing cream applied and left on for half an hour
- The area will then be cleaned again
- You will be placed under the OMNILUX LED light for a maximum of 17 minutes
- Your therapist will be with you during this time
- Protective eye wear will be given to you to wear during the treatment
- The treatment area will be cooled with cold water spray and a small fan.
- You will experience stinging or burning during the light treatment. The feeling is usually strongest during the 2nd to 7th minute of the treatment. It may last up to 24 hours.
- If at any time the feeling becomes too strong, tell your therapist straight away. The treatment may have to be interrupted or stopped altogether.
- Before you leave, a large amount of sunscreen will be applied to the treated area

AFTER THE TREATMENT

- Your skin will be very sensitive to light after this treatment. Protect your skin with the items you were asked to bring
- You will have scaling and crusting on the skin for at least one week, sometimes up to 4 weeks after the treatment
- You will have redness and sometimes swelling for up to 4 weeks after the treatment
- Your treated skin may look darker or lighter

Avoid the sun and /or bright light for 36 hours. Take time off work and do not leave the house

Protect your skin with sunscreen, hat, sleeves, etc.

Use creams as prescribed

POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS:

The short-term side effects of phototherapy include:

- **Pain.** When the red light is shone onto the skin, the treated area may hurt. If it is too uncomfortable, your doctor or therapist may suggest pausing treatment for a while, or a local anaesthetic injection may be recommended. After completion of treatment, discomfort and itching may last for a few days, and may require pain-killers.
- **Inflammation.** The treated area may initially become pink and puffy, and may ooze a little: this is a normal reaction. It settles within a few days.
- **Blistering and ulceration.** The treated area may occasionally blister or ulcerate.
- **Infection.** If the treated area becomes red, swollen and painful, an infection may have developed, and you should contact your doctor.

POTENTIAL LONG-TERM SIDE EFFECTS OF PHOTOTHERAPY INCLUDE:

- **Scarring.** There may be some scarring after PDT.
- **Colour change.** The skin may be left darker or paler after PDT.
- Treatment **may not be effective**, or the condition may come back again. If this happens, you may be offered further PDT, or an alternative type of treatment may be recommended.

I HAVE READ THE INFORMATION AND FULLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT PDT IS ABOUT

NAME:

SIGNATURE:

DATE: