

Narrowband (TL-01) UV-b phototherapy

What else should you know?

- 1) Treatments will be quite short to begin with, but will get longer as your treatment course progresses. It is important that you are prepared to commit yourself to regular attendance for 8/12-16 weeks (depending on the area treated), as an uncompleted course is wasteful, and only serves to increase the risks associated with ultraviolet exposure.
- 2) We strongly recommend that you use a bland moisturiser such as Diprobase, whilst you are undergoing UV therapy.
- 3) Remember that the treatment has been prescribed specifically for YOU and YOUR diagnosed condition. If a doctor prescribes any medication during your course of treatment, it is essential that we check it for suitability with UV therapy. Let the clinic know immediately if you need to take any medicines, whether purchased over the counter or prescribed, so that we can check with the pharmacy department.
- 4) There are self-help groups for some of the skin conditions we treat - please ask for details.
- 5) If you miss appointments we will assume that you no longer require UV therapy.

We must advise you that only persons having UV treatment are allowed to remain in the unit during treatment. Adults (unless the patient requires a carer) and ESPECIALLY CHILDREN are not allowed to wait in the treatment areas.

**IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND OR NEED TO ASK US ABOUT ANYTHING,
YOUR CLINIC PHONE NUMBER IS:-**

08454 228349

(24 hour answerphone)

Introduction

These notes are intended to provide you with information about your treatment. The entire notes should be read so that you are aware of the requirements on your part to ensure the effectiveness and safety of the therapy. Any additional questions that you may have can be answered by clinic staff or doctor.

What is narrowband UV-B phototherapy?

Phototherapy means literally treatment with light, and has been used for centuries. Today it implies the use of artificial sources of light (almost always ultraviolet lamps) to treat skin disorders. Natural sunlight contains a wide range of rays (wavelengths), from infra-red, through the visible colours of light, to ultraviolet (UV-A and UV-B). The special lamps used in narrowband or TL-01 phototherapy emit a very limited range of UV-B wavelengths, almost entirely one wavelength, at 311 nanometres. The advantage of this is that it avoids some of the undesirable burning effects of broadband treatments and sunlight.

What should you do before UV-B Therapy?

Certain other medicines can make you more sensitive to the UV treatment. In addition, some medical conditions can be aggravated by UV. Before starting therapy, be sure to tell your doctor, or clinic staff, if any of the following apply to you:-

- 1) have had a severe reaction to any ultraviolet therapy in the past,
- 2) have had recent X-Ray treatment (not diagnostic X-rays) or plan to,
- 3) have, or ever had, skin cancer,
- 4) have, or ever had, any eye problems such as cataracts or loss of the lens of the eyes,
- 5) have, or ever had, heart or blood pressure problems,
- 6) have any medical condition that requires you to stay out of the sun,

- 7) are using any topical creams or ointments or are taking ANY medicines (this includes items prescribed or bought over the counter and herbal/natural preparations such as St. John's Wort). We are happy to check that they are suitable to use in conjunction with your UVB treatment. Please note that any new medicines that you take during your course of treatment must always be reported to the Phototherapy staff.

Unless you are specifically asked to, please do not use any ointments or creams, coal-tar products or perfumed soaps and toiletries on the day of treatment. (Do not use Coal-Tar preparations for at least 24 hours prior to UV therapy). This is because some perfumes and medicines contain chemicals which increase light sensitivity, and might lead to a "sunburn effect" following UV. Once you have had your treatment you can then apply your ointments or creams.

Hospital Policy requires you to sign a consent form for this treatment

How should you protect yourself from light during and after UV therapy?

- 1) Eye protection - Make sure that you wear protective close-fitting goggles that we have tested and approved, while in the UV cabin. They will be provided for you in the clinic, and must be worn while the lamps are on.
- 2) Men should cover the genital skin with a close-fitting pouch (provided in the clinic) as the skin in this area is thinner and more sensitive. Try to ensure the pouch covers the same area each time. The tapes need to be tied in different positions each time, so as to avoid the same area being shielded.
- 3) You may be required to wear a visor.
- 4) Do not expose skin and lips to strong sunlight or sun lamps during a UV therapy course, to avoid overdosing your skin with ultraviolet. In sunny conditions use a sunblock/high SPF sunscreen on sun-exposed areas of the skin following your treatment.

How long will treatment last?

The course will last approx. 8 weeks for whole body, 12-16 weeks for hands and feet. It may take several weeks before your skin condition improves. You may need further courses of UV treatment to keep the disease under control. Please remember that it is important to attend both promptly and regularly, i.e 3 times a week for 8 weeks/12-16 weeks.

Are there problems associated with pregnancy or breast-feeding whilst having UV therapy?

There is no known risk to an unborn child or breastfed baby from UV therapy. It is sensible to inform your doctor or the clinic staff if you are planning pregnancy or become pregnant, in case your skin sensitivity changes as a result.

What are the possible side-effects?

The most common side-effects of UV therapy are mild itching and redness of the skin, similar to an acute overdose of sun. Tenderness or blistering of the skin may occur on rare occasions, but can be helped by products recommended by clinic staff, doctor or pharmacist.

Important: Contact the PHOTOTHERAPY clinic or GP, if any side-effect continues to bother you after 24-48 hours.

What are the risks of Narrowband UVB therapy?

As with prolonged sun exposure there are potential consequences for the skin from UV treatment. Premature ageing of the skin including some loss of elasticity may occur. For some patients there may be a slight increase in the risk of developing one of the skin cancers (non-melanoma). However we keep the number of treatments as low as possible to minimise this risk.