

Bath PUVA

- 6) Use the disposable wipe provided to frequently swab, with bath water, any other areas which need treatment but are not covered with bath water, e.g. shoulders and upper chest. These areas must be the same each time.
- 7) When time is up, pull the plug out of bath and pat yourself dry with the towel provided.
- 8) Put on a dressing gown and the blue "slippers" and go immediately to PUVA treatment room.

What else should you know?

- 1) If you have any lesions or areas of skin that you wish to show the clinic staff please do so before having your psoralen bath.
- 2) We recommend that you use a bland moisturiser (such as Diprobase) whilst you are undergoing PUVA therapy to combat the possible drying effect of the treatment.
- 3) There are self-help groups for some of the conditions we treat - please ask for details.
- 4) ALWAYS KEEP ALL DRUGS OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN.
- 5) If you miss appointments, we will assume that you no longer require PUVA 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 YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS ANY ASPECT OF YOUR TREATMENT, YOUR CLINIC PHONE NUMBER IS:

08454 228349

(24 hr answerphone)

Introduction

PUVA Psoralen is phototoxic (that is, it makes skin much more sensitive to light) - ask for help immediately if spilled on skin.

These notes are intended to provide you with information about your treatment. Please read the whole pamphlet so that you are fully aware of how to help us make your treatment as safe and effective as we can. Any additional questions that you may have can be answered by clinic staff or doctor.

What is Bath "PUVA" Therapy?

Bath PUVA involves soaking for 15 minutes in a bath of water containing the drug Psoralen which, after absorption, is 'activated' by UVA light given in a strictly monitored dose. Several different skin diseases can be treated effectively with PUVA.

What is the UVA Light?

Light is classified into many different wavelengths or parts. One part is known as ultraviolet light, a normal component of sunlight. Artificial light sources are available that produce ultraviolet "A".

What should you do before PUVA Therapy?

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

- 1) have had a severe reaction to puvasoralen in the past,
- 2) have had recent radiotherapy treatment or are planning any,
- 3) have, or ever had, skin cancer,
- 4) have any medical condition that requires you to stay out of the sun.
- 5) 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 PUVA treatment. Please note that any new medicines that you take during your course of treatment must always be reported to the Phototherapy staff.

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

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

What special precautions should you take?

- 1) Skin and Lip protection - Do not expose skin to sunlight or sun lamps for 24 hours after treatment. Cover as much of your skin as possible with clothing (dark, closely woven fabrics are best). Avoid sitting near a window as UV-A can pass through glass. You may be more sensitive to sunlight for 2 - 3 days.
- 2) Apply a sunblock/high SPF suncream to sun-exposed skin before leaving the Phototherapy Department e.g. face and hands.

How long will the treatment last?

This course will last 8 weeks. It may take several weeks before your skin condition improves. Please remember that it is important to attend regularly, i.e twice a week for 8 weeks.

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

- 1) Birth-control methods should be used because the effects of PUVA therapy on the unborn child are not known. If you become pregnant, inform clinic staff immediately.
- 2) Since it is not known whether Puvasoralen passes into mother's milk, it is safer not to breast-feed whilst using this drug.

What are the possible side-effects?

You may experience slight reddening and/or itchiness of the skin during the two or three days following treatment. More rarely tenderness or blistering of the skin can occur, but can be helped by products recommended by clinical staff, your doctor or pharmacist. It is important to contact your Phototherapy Dept or GP, if any side effect is severe or bothers you at any stage..

Are there any long term side effects?

As with prolonged sun exposure there are potential consequences for the skin from PUVA. Premature ageing of the skin including some loss of elasticity may occur. For some patients there may be a slightly increased 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.

Instructions for Bathing

- 1) Undress completely
- 2) Put on goggles/approved eye protection (keep these on until out of bath)
- 3) Lower yourself gently into prepared bath. Agitate the water gently from time to time but avoid splashing water over sides if possible (the bath will be quite full)
- 4) Start the timer (15 minutes)
- 5) Make sure your knees, shoulders etc. are submerged.