

UVB PHOTOTHERAPY PATIENT

UVB (Ultraviolet B light) is the most common form of phototherapy and is used to treat various skin diseases including, psoriasis, eczema, and itching. You will be exposed to this high-energy UV light for varying lengths of time with each treatment. This treatment is **NOT A CURE** but can effectively control and or improve your disease. Patients have used this treatment successfully for many years and often are able to maintain clearance of improved skin over extended periods of time. Each condition and patient will vary in the number of treatments needed per week and the time it will take to reach clearing. Most patients initially require 3 to 5 treatments each week to clear their lesions. Typically, treatments start with only a few seconds of light exposure and increase gradually as determined by the staff. It may take 15-25 treatments, or longer, to see improvement of your disease. Not all patients will clear completely but many patients go into remission and may then stop treatments.

The expected benefits of phototherapy are:

1. Improvement of existing lesions
2. Reduction of new lesions;
3. Remission – in many cases phototherapy has resulted in a near-total clearing of the disease process. The duration of this remission varies with each patient. Maintenance therapy may be required.

Risks and side-effects of phototherapy:

1. The most common side-effect of this therapy is UVB-induced sunburn. This may occur at any time during therapy. Certain medications may cause you to get sunburnt or increase your sensitivity so, please notify us of **ANY** medications you are taking or begin taking while undergoing therapy.
2. It is possible, with any form of UV light, that an increased incidence of skin cancer may occur later in some patients; usually only with many UV light treatments.
3. UV treatments may cause dryness, itching, and may age the skin over time; increasing freckles and hyperpigmentation.
4. Ultraviolet rays may damage the eyes and increase your risk of cataracts. This is **preventable** with protective eye goggles worn during treatment. These will be given to you and are **REQUIRED** to be worn for treatment.
5. UV light may cause a flare of fever blisters and mouth sores in susceptible people.
6. Long-term UV exposure to unprotected genital area in men may cause an increase in genital cancer. Therefore, **ALL MEN MUST** wear an athletic supporter while in the light box.
7. UV light may cause exacerbation of other medical conditions such as, lupus erythematosus, which have sensitivity to UV wavelengths.

Ultraviolet B (UVB) phototherapy involves standing in a light box, a closed-in cubicle, which is lined with ultraviolet lights. You will **NOT** be locked into the light cabinet. You may open the doors and exit the booth at any time during the treatment. In the beginning, treatment sessions may last around 20 seconds. Treatment times slowly increase with each visit depending on patient tolerance and skin disease being treated.

Please follow the guidelines below to assure a smooth and productive treatment experience:

1. Males are **required** to wear an athletic supporter while in the light box. Females will undress completely for their treatment unless otherwise instructed by their physician.
2. You will be given a pair of protective eye goggles at your first visit. You are **required** to bring them to each treatment and wear them during the light exposure.
3. While you are in the light cabinet stand in the middle at a normal stance. The lights are on all the panels, plus reflector sheets, which dispense the light rays for uniform exposure.
4. Please notify the staff of any redness and/or tenderness you have during or after your treatment. At home, cool compresses and aspirin are helpful for mild sunburn reactions.
5. Notify the staff if you begin any new medications during your treatment as certain medications affect your sensitivity to UV light.
6. All patients should use sunscreen AFTER treatment.
7. Avoid additional sunlight on the day of treatment to prevent burning.
8. Children undergoing UVB must be accompanied by a parent.
9. Timers are provided in the light boxes for your use so that you will be fully aware of the amount of time you receive light. The light box itself also has a timer, but backup timers promote safety.
10. Please **DO NOT** apply sunscreen before treatment

Please follow up with your dermatologist at least once a year for a full skin exam and should you have any questions concerning any aspect of you treatment, please call us at 703-450-5959.