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Narrow Band UVB

Phototherapy Information Sheet

NBUBV is the most common form of phototherapy used to treat skin diseases by reducing inflammation and preventing skin cells growing too quickly. "Narrowband" refers to a specific wavelength of ultraviolet (UV) radiation, 311 to 312 nm. The most common conditions treated are psoriasis, atopic eczema and vitiligo. Phototherapy can be used on small or large areas of the body.

Treatment with UVB phototherapy requires commitment because of the number of treatments needed each week. The treatment is more effective when you receive regular treatments and stick to the treatment plan that your dermatologist has recommended. The usual treatment schedule is 3 times a week. **To minimise the risk of getting burnt, the dose will be reduced by 20% compared to your previous session if one-week treatments are missed. We must restart the course if more than two weeks' worth of treatments are missed.**

Improvement is gradual and variable, dependent on how your skin and condition respond to treatment. It normally takes at least 20 treatments /6 weeks to see any effects, so you don't see immediate improvement. You will be required to be reviewed by your dermatologist every 6 to 12 weeks (normally every 12 weeks) to determine how your skin is responding to the treatment and if further treatment is required.

What to expect with UV treatments

Treatments are usually performed by one of our nurses, and we set the energy according to your skin colour to prevent you from burning. Each Treatment lasts seconds to minutes as we gradually increase the dose.

Whole body:

- You will be standing in the centre of a cabinet with a bank of specially designed light tubes. inside a light box for each Treatment. If you need to come out of the cabinet for whatever reason during Treatment, you can do so at any time as the door is not locked so you don't have to feel like you are trapped inside.
- Your eyes are shielded with maximum protection UV wrap-around sun goggles. If you have active psoriasis or eczema on your buttocks, wearing a G-string for women and a sock for men is advised. Please ensure you wear the same style of underwear each time you have treatment (to ensure the same surface area is covered) and to protect the genital area.

- Do not wear perfume or aftershave before being treated. Do not apply treatment creams or ointments at home before coming for treatment. After each treatment, you need to apply moisturiser and sunscreen to protect yourself from the sun, and you can resume using your creams/ointments after 6 hours.
- Other medications prescribed for your skin can be used whilst receiving NBUVB; however, do not apply Daivobet ointment before treatment. These can be applied after treatment.

2. Short term side effects include:

- Burning, redness, itch, tanning or blisters, just like you might have after sunburn. You will be instructed what to do if this occurs. It is important to contact us if the burn is severe, so that the appropriate treatment can be given. **Exposure to natural sunlight on your treatment days should be avoided. The combination of phototherapy and natural sunlight can increase your risk for sunburn.** Do not use tanning or sun beds during your treatment.
- A rash brought on by the exposure to UVB, but this is rare.
- Precipitation of a cold sore (if you are susceptible). Protect the area with SPF 50+ sunscreen, where cold sores usually occur.
- Your skin may feel drier whilst having phototherapy. To overcome any feeling of dryness, it is recommended that you use fragrance-free soap, wash & moisturisers. During treatment moisturise regularly and reduce the use of soap while bathing to prevent further skin dryness.
- A flare of your condition may occur, this may be due to light itself or heat produced.
- If goggles are not worn correctly, the damage the eyes may occur.
- When the psoriasis or eczema gets better there is often a darkening of the skin over the site of the psoriasis. This darkening can take up to 3 months to disappear.

Long term side effects include:

- Signs of premature aging include age spots, fine lines and wrinkles, freckles, loss of elasticity, changes in the texture and tone of the skin and dilated capillaries, although this will not be as significant as normal UVA sun damage.
- Phototherapy may slightly increase the risk of skin cancer. It is important to have your skin checked by your dermatologist, on a regular basis.

If you have any other questions, please contact us 02 9423 0033 or email us at info@auroradermatology.com.au.