

Photodynamic Therapy for Skin Lesions Information for patients

**Medical Directorate
Department of Dermatology**



Options available

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this leaflet then please call:

01253 955588

Our Four Values:

People Centred

Positive

Compassion

Excellence

Photodynamic Therapy

Photodynamic therapy is a treatment that uses a combination of cream and a special light to treat certain localized skin disorders. As this is not a surgical procedure, the treatment gives a good cosmetic result. For most lesions the treatment is required twice, one week apart.

On the day you have your treatment, you will have to be at the Dermatology Department at Clifton Hospital in the morning at the time indicated on your appointment card.

Any scale will be removed from the lesion and a cream will be applied onto the area to be treated and this will be covered by a dressing.

You will be free to go until your treatment in the afternoon, which will be between 3 and 4 hours later. If for any reason there are problems with transport, arrangements can be made for patients to stay on the Unit until their treatment in the afternoon; however, most patients prefer to go home. As the cream is required to be in contact with the skin for a specific time, it is vital that you attend your appointments promptly.

On return, in the afternoon, the dressing and cream are removed and then a specially designated light will be shone on the area; the light does not affect normal skin because the cream is only absorbed into the any abnormal skin cells in the affected area.

The treatment lasts between 7 and 10 minutes or longer if more than one area is to be treated.

The light can, very occasionally, be intense and a burning sensation may be felt during the treatment, but there will be a nurse available at all times and the area can be sprayed with cold water to cool it. The treatment is usually well tolerated but a local anaesthetic can be given if needed.

Immediately after the treatment you will be free to go. You will be given a follow up appointment to come back and see your Consultant in about 12 weeks, who will review the effectiveness of the treatment.

The lesion will be covered with a dressing. After the treatment, the area can be quite sensitive to any type of heat such as hot baths or sitting too close to the fire; this effect will last for about 48 hours following the treatment, so it is advisable to avoid these situations. It is also important that the area remains covered for 48 hours following the treatment to protect the treated area from daylight.

The area may weep and crust over for up to two weeks after the treatment; this is normal and a dry dressing can be applied during this time if desired.

Occasionally, there can be a strong reaction to the treatment where there is excessive inflammation and pain in the treatment area or to the surrounding skin. If for any reason you are worried you can speak to a nurse, who may ask you to come to the Department or give advice over the telephone.

The telephone numbers are:
(01253) 957087/9 9am-4.30pm Dermatology Secretaries
(01253) 957079 between 8 am and 8 pm Monday -
Saturdays



Useful contact details

Telephone numbers are

01253 957087/9 9am - 4.30

Monday to Friday

0125 957079 8am - 8pm Monday to Saturday

Hospital Switchboard: **01253 300000**

Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives. You can contact them via:

Tel: **01253 955589**

email: **patient.relations@bfwh.nhs.uk**

You can also write to us at:

**Patient Relations Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital,
Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR**

Further information is available on our website: **www.bfwh.nhs.uk**

References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: **Procedural Document and Leaflet Coordinator 01253 953397**

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