

# UVB Therapy

**Medical Directorate  
Department of Dermatology**

**Patient Information Leaflet**



UVB therapy, sometimes referred to as TLO1 (after the type of tubes that are used), is used for a number of skin disorders including psoriasis, eczema and polymorphic light eruption (prickly heat). For treatment, the patient stands in a cabinet to receive exposure to ultra-violet light. Treatment may last from a few seconds, building up gradually with each visit, to about 15 minutes. A course of treatment usually involves attending the hospital two or three times a week for a period of around six to eight weeks.

The dermatology nursing staff administer the treatments, but the dose (duration) of each treatment session is determined by a computer programme and is adjusted according to how many treatments you have already had and how well you tolerate sunlight. In this way, the possibilities of human error are reduced.

UVB therapy is normally given in a limited course of a few weeks, which can be repeated after an interval if necessary. This is less damaging to the skin than continuous therapy without a break. There is no evidence that UVB therapy given in this way causes skin cancer, but you should remember that it is similar to natural sunlight, and therefore the amount of sunbathing or sun exposure you have had will affect the safety of the treatment.

Because the treatment involves a shorter wavelength of light than commercial sunbeds, it is possible to develop sunburn as a side effect of UVB. This normally does not happen because the increase in dose during your course of treatment is very carefully controlled. However, if you feel that a particular treatment was too much for you (for instance, if you notice discomfort or redness) it is important that you tell the nurses next time you attend, as the dose can then be adjusted.

We are able to offer treatment times from 08.00 to about 19.30 Monday to Saturday. Waiting times to start treatment are usually from 2 to 4 weeks but may be longer, especially if you need early morning or late evening times as these are popular.

## Points to remember:

- Be careful about additional sun exposure on the day of your treatment, as the dose of UVB will be close to what your skin can tolerate.
- Tell the nursing staff about any medication you are taking, as some medicines may make you more sensitive to ultra-violet light.
- It may be appropriate for you to continue to use your treatment creams while having therapy. Check with the nursing staff.
- Do not use tar-based treatment before UVB therapy. This can make you burn more easily.
- Avoid perfumed cosmetics while having treatment, as they can make you more sensitive to ultra-violet light.
- You will be issued with goggles to wear in the cabinet. It is essential that you do not remove these during treatment.
- For the treatment women normally remove all their clothes but men usually keep their briefs on to protect genital skin from ultraviolet light. It is important to remember that if you do protect any part of your skin from the light during treatment, you will have to continue to protect exactly the same area of skin for all future treatments in that course, otherwise you will be much more likely to burn in that area. If you wear briefs, they must cover exactly the same areas of skin on each occasion.
- It is possible to miss occasional treatments provided you inform the nursing staff, but the treatment will not work well if you miss a great deal. If you miss more than 3 or 4 treatments without telling the staff, your treatment time will be given to someone else, as there are many patients waiting for treatment.

## Other sources of information:



Clifton Hospital: **01253 956238/957089**  
8.30am-4pm  
Fleetwood Hospital: **01253 956053**



**Hospital switchboard**  
Telephone: **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**  
or by email: **bfwh.patientrelations@nhs.net**



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

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this booklet then please call: **01253 955520**



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Author: Janette Fenton  
Approved by: Dermatology Departmental Meeting  
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