



DERMATOLOGY ASSOCIATES
A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

Photodynamic Therapy

Day of Treatment

- Eat a normal breakfast & take your routine morning medications
- Please come with a freshly cleansed face. If you normally shave, please do so the morning of your appointment.
- To protect the treated area you will need: **a broad brimmed hat and a bandanna or scarf. Please bring with you.**
- You will be waiting 1-2 hours (or as designated by your physician) while the medication is absorbed into your skin, so please consider bringing something to do while you wait for the treatment (Book, magazine, tablet).

After The Treatment

- You **must** go straight home and stay indoors for 36 hours.
- Once you are home please avoid direct sunlight through the windows. You may go outside once it is completely dark.
- If you have any discomfort, you may use ice packs and take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, etc.) or Tylenol.
- Your recovery may take anywhere from 2-10 days.
- Your skin will likely be red, dry, and tight for the first few days.
- You may have crusting and peeling, if so, use Vaseline to keep your skin moist.

If you have any questions please Crystal at 503-293-7677. If I am unavailable to take your call our office is always staffed with someone that will assist you with your questions. Wound care will be discussed at length following your treatment. Supplies for your post care will be provided at your visit. You will also be given written instructions outlining the care required.

PDT PATIENT GUIDE

What is photodynamic therapy?

Photodynamic therapy (PDT) is a special treatment performed with a topical photosensitizing agent called levulan 5-aminolevulinic acid (ALA), activated with the correct wavelength of light. This is also known as ALA-PDT treatment. These treatments remove sun-damaged precancerous areas and spots called actinic keratoses. Sun damage, fine lines and blotchy pigmentation are also improved because of the positive effect of levulan and the light treatment.

How many treatments will it take to see the “best results”?

To achieve maximum improvement of precancerous (actinic keratoses) sun damage, skin tone and texture, a series of 1-2 treatments, 2-6 months apart is usually most effective. Many patients with actinic keratoses are happy with one treatment. More treatments can be done at periodic intervals in the future to maintain the rejuvenated appearance of the skin.

What are the disadvantages?

Following PDT, the treated areas can appear red with some peeling and crusting for 7-10 days. Some patients have an exuberant response to PDT and experience marked redness of their skin. Temporary swelling of the lips and around the eyes can occur for a few days. Darker pigmented patches can become temporarily darker and then peel off leaving normal skin (this usually occurs over 7-10 days). Repeat treatments may be necessary.

What are the advantages?

- Redness and crusting after PDT typically lasts 7-10 days as compared to 4-6 weeks with topical Efudex or Aldara treatment.
- Reduced scarring and improved cosmetic outcome compared with liquid nitrogen, surgery, or Efudex.
- Levulan improves the whole facial area treated, creating one color, texture and tone, rather than just spot treating with liquid nitrogen, cautery or surgery.

What is an Actinic Keratosis?

An actinic keratosis is a scaly or crusty lesion that forms on the skin surface. They range in size from a small pinhead spot to over an inch across. They may be light or dark, tan, pink, red, a combination of these, or the same color as your skin. **Why is it dangerous?** Actinic keratoses can be the first step in the development of skin cancer, and, therefore, is a precursor of cancer or a “precancer”. It is estimated that 10 to 15 percent of active lesions, which are redder and more tender than the rest, will take the next step and progress to a skin cancer called Squamous cell carcinoma. The most aggressive form of keratoses, actinic cheilitis, appears on the lips and can evolve into Squamous cell carcinoma. When this happens, roughly one-fifth of these carcinomas metastasize.