



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Information for Patients Receiving UVB (Narrowband) Treatment

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

Dermatology Department York

Telephone: 01904 726629

Dermatology Department Scarborough

Telephone: 01723 342492

Outpatient Department Selby

Telephone: 01904 724296

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What is UVB therapy?

This leaflet will give you information about the treatment that has been recommended for your skin condition and give you the answers to most commonly asked questions. If you have other questions that are not covered, please ask at your next appointment or call the numbers highlighted on the front page.

Narrowband UVB is a treatment for various skin conditions. The skin is exposed to specific and precise wavelengths of ultraviolet B light. The aim of treatment is to improve your skin to an optimum level.

You will be treated with Narrowband UVB light which is emitted by florescent light tubes.

How often do I have treatment?

Narrowband UVB is usually given three times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday)

It is very important that you attend **all** appointments to maximise the benefit of treatment. If you are unable to attend, please contact the department. If you fail to attend more than three treatments without informing staff, your treatment time may be given to another patient and your treatment may be stopped and you could be discharged.

What is involved?

- You will be required to attend a pre-assessment. At this appointment we will discuss your treatment and assess your skin condition. If your skin condition allows, we will do a test dose of light therapy on a small area of skin. The time of exposure for your first treatment is based on your skin's reaction to this test dose. If your skin condition is extensive, we will still do a test dose and your first treatment time will be based on your skin type.
- Please bring a full list of your oral and topical medications that you are currently taking to your pre-assessment as some medications can make you more photosensitive and we need to document these.
- After your pre-assessment and test dose of phototherapy you will be given an appointment for the following day. At this appointment the nurses will read and assess the results of the test dose, you may then have your first course of light treatment, sometimes you may need to wait to start treatment.
- You will stand unclothed in a cabinet with UVB light tubes. However, you may be asked to wear cotton clothes during treatment to protect the skin that does not need treating.

- You will be provided with close fitting goggles, which must be worn throughout. **Do not open your eyes during treatment.**
- Men will be advised to bring a scrotal support or a sock to be worn over the genital area while having treatment.
- All clothes worn during treatment should be of close thick weave fabric, and the same clothes **must** be worn during every treatment.
- Avoid having a haircut during the course of treatment.

What are the side effects?

Any side effects that you experience must be discussed with the nurse.

Common side effects to be aware of:

- Redness
- Itching
- Tanning
- Soreness
- Burning
- Blistering
- If you have a history of cold sores that are triggered by the sun, these can be triggered by UVB.

- Increased risk of developing cataracts in the future if you do not wear the protective goggles/ visor/ close your eyes during treatment.

The risk of problems is reduced by the pre-assessment and the gradual increase in dose. Depending on the severity of any problems, the nurse may not give you your treatment until your skin has settled. Please speak to the nurse if you have any concerns about this.

To minimise the risk of this:

- Do not apply cosmetics, perfumes, aftershaves or deodorants for at least four hours before your treatment as these may make your skin more sensitive to ultraviolet light, resulting in patchy discolouration of the skin.
- Skin dryness and itching can be helped by the use of moisturising cream which can be applied up to 30 minutes before treatment. If you have any questions about this please ask one of the nurses.
- Avoid any other forms of UV light e.g., sunbathing or sun beds during your PUVA treatment. It is recommended to use sunscreen of at least SPF30 plus and three- or four-star UVA protection. Significant exposure to direct sunlight should be avoided on treatment days.
- Inform the doctor or nurse of any medication you are taking especially if you start taking any new medication once your treatment has begun.

What are the long-term risks?

Long term exposure to UVB can increase the risk of developing skin cancer. The risk levels are thought to be low for this particular form of light therapy. To reduce the risks, we aim to keep the courses of light therapy as short as possible.

If you notice any skin changes for example the beginning of a small lump or have any concerns, please tell the Dermatology clinic staff or your GP.

This form of light treatment has been safely used during pregnancy. However, if you have any concerns please discuss them with the staff.

What do I do after treatment?

After your treatment you may find it helpful to apply a moisturiser (emollient). You should continue to use any topical skin treatments prescribed by your doctor on treatment days as well as the days you do not have light therapy. Staff can advise on when and how to apply your topical treatment.

How to contact us

If you have concerns between your appointments, please contact the department, and one of the nurses will be able to help you.

York Clinic

Telephone: 01904 726621

Monday to Friday

Scarborough Clinic

Telephone: 01723 342492

Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Selby Clinic

Telephone: 01904 724296

Monday to Friday

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:
Katy Maskell, Sister, Dermatology Department, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or telephone 01904 726621.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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