

## PhotoDynamic Therapy (PDT) Patient Information

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### What is PhotoDynamic Therapy?

It is a treatment for skin conditions that may be cancerous or pre-cancerous.

A red light is used to activate a chemical that has been applied and absorbed into your skin that kills the abnormal skin cells.

The chemical that is needed to make this treatment work comes from a cream called methyl 5-aminolevulinate or a gel called 5-aminolevulinic acid.

The cream or gel needs to be applied to the area on your skin that requires treatment and left for three hours to allow optimum absorption to take place.

Dependent on your diagnosis you may require one or two cycles of treatment (two cycles are usually within three weeks of each other).

### Are there any alternative treatments?

This treatment was recommended for you after consultation with your healthcare professional following both assessment of the area requiring treatment and having considered other treatment options.

### What does it involve?

On the day of your treatment you will be required to attend the Dermatology department for **two different appointment times on that same day**.

At the first appointment the dermatology nurse will explain how the treatment works, what to expect and the possible side effects. You will be asked to sign a consent form giving your permission to have the treatment.

The area requiring treatment will then be prepared lifting any scale or crust, and the cream or gel applied and covered with a dressing.

After three hours you will return to the Dermatology department for the red light phase of your treatment. The red light treats the area for about 10 minutes, the time may vary if more than one area is treated.

### Will it hurt?

You may experience a burning or stinging sensation during the treatment and you may wish to take pain relief half an hour **BEFORE** the start of the red light phase.

The red light phase of your treatment incorporates the use of a fan and this cooling helps to alleviate some of the discomfort. A water spray can also be used.

### Care of the area(s) after treatment:

After treatment the affected area will be covered with a dressing and you will need to keep the area clean and dry. This dressing may be removed after 48 hours.

Once the dressing has been removed you can wash/bathe/shower as usual, but it is important that you do not rub the treated area, but gently dab it dry.

If the area oozes after removal of the dressing you may wish to apply another, a spare dressing will have been given to you at the time of your appointment.

### **Short-term side effects:**

**Pain:** After completion of treatment, discomfort and itching may last for a few days, and may require pain relief.

**Inflammation:** The treated area may become inflamed and may ooze a little, this is a normal reaction and settles within a few days.

**Blistering and ulceration:** The treated area may occasionally blister or ulcerate.

**Infection:** If the treated area becomes red, swollen and painful, an infection may have developed, and you should contact your GP.

### **Potential long-term side effects:**

**Scarring:** There may be some scarring following treatment.

**Colour change:** The skin may be left darker or paler after treatment.

### **Follow-up:**

Dependent on your diagnosis you may need to return within three weeks to repeat the treatment.

If you have a number of areas to be treated it may not be possible to do this at one appointment and further appointments could be needed.

When a specific skin lesion has been treated with the initial one or two cycles of treatment, follow-up will be arranged for you in three months with the dermatology nurse.

**Please note PhotoDynamic Therapy may not be fully effective in some patients.**

Following your treatment please take extra care in the sun and use high factor protection.

**If you have any further questions please phone the Dermatology Department on any of the numbers below:**

**01493 453545 or 01493 453602 or 01493 453601 during the hours of 08:30 and 17:15 Monday to Friday.**

### **Feedback**

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

### **Trust Values**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Courtesy and respect</li><li>• A welcoming and positive attitude</li><li>• Polite, friendly and interested in people</li><li>• Value and respect people as individuals</li></ul> <p>So people feel <b>welcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attentively kind and helpful</li><li>• Look out for dignity, privacy &amp; humanity</li><li>• Attentive, responsive &amp; take time to help</li><li>• Visible presence of staff to provide care</li></ul> <p>So people feel <b>cared for</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsive communication</li><li>• Listen to people &amp; answer their questions</li><li>• Keep people clearly informed</li><li>• Involve people</li></ul> <p>So people feel <b>in control</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective and professional</li><li>• Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring</li><li>• Effective care / services from joined up teams</li><li>• Organised and timely, looking to improve</li></ul> <p>So people feel <b>safe</b></p> |
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The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

**For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240**