

Tampere University Hospital / Skin diseases
Patient instructions 60.00.12

Narrowband ultraviolet B (UVB) therapy

General information about phototherapy and UVB therapy

Phototherapy using ultraviolet radiation is generally used to treat a variety of skin conditions, such as atopic eczema and psoriasis. It can also be used as a preventive desensitisation treatment for people with photodermatitis. Narrowband UVB therapy involves the administration of short-wave UVB-zone ultraviolet radiation. The process starts with small doses of light that are increased with time. Patients usually undergo 2–3 sessions per week a total of 15–30 times, depending on the type of skin disease and its severity.

What happens on phototherapy days?

You will be given protective glasses to wear while the phototherapy is being administered. It is a good idea to keep your eyes closed too. Men should cover their genital area for the duration of the phototherapy. Otherwise, the phototherapy can be administered to all skin areas with symptoms. Your face will be covered unless there are any affected areas there that require phototherapy. The professional carrying out the phototherapy will provide any necessary protective equipment.

The phototherapy will take place in a phototherapy cabinet, and the professional will adjust the length of exposure at each appointment. The phototherapy exposure time varies from under a minute to a few minutes.

Side effects

Side effects can include nausea and the skin being itchy, dry, or red or other skin sensations. These side effects are not dangerous and will pass, but it is a good idea to tell the professional treating you about them.

Other important information about phototherapy treatment

Avoid all unnecessary exposure to the sun throughout the treatment period. Exposure to 'artificial sunlight' (e.g. solariums) is not permitted during PUVA therapy periods.

Phototherapy causes the skin to be prone to drying out. Use a non-scented moisturiser to prevent this. Also use the medicated creams your dermatologist prescribes for you in accordance with the instructions during the phototherapy period, but not immediately before a phototherapy session. Any moisturisers and medicated creams used the day before a phototherapy session do not need to be washed off the skin. Cortisone creams may be used during phototherapy periods as normal, but use of creams containing calcineurin inhibitors (tacrolimus and pimecrolimus) must be paused for the duration of phototherapy.

Before the phototherapy, make sure to remove any make-up from your face, with the exception of any eye make-up that will be behind the protective glasses, if any areas on your face are being treated. Other cosmetic products, such as aftershave, perfume and deodorant, may irritate the skin during the phototherapy, so it is advised to avoid using them before a phototherapy session. Skin cleansing treatments carried out by cosmetologists should also be avoided for the evening before and day of phototherapy sessions.

Patient instructions

Some medications can make the skin more sensitive to light. For this reason, please tell any other doctors who are treating you about your phototherapy if they prescribe you new medications. It is important to also inform the professional administering your phototherapy about any new medications.

Information about appointment booking and treatment fees

A serial treatment fee will be charged for each phototherapy appointment. Appointments will be billed for afterwards.

Please adhere to your appointment time. However, if you are going to be late, please inform us as early as possible, preferably by text message to 045 739 65953. Please include your name, date of birth and what you need to tell us in the message. If you are unable to send a message, please call our call-back system on 03 311 67547. If you do not attend an appointment and have not cancelled it, you will be charged a fee in accordance with Pirha's instructions (pirha.fi/asiakkaalle/asiakasmaksut/kayttamatta-ja-peruuttamatta-jatetyn-palvelun-maksu).

Appointment transfers and other matters that can be dealt with quickly will be carried out free of charge, but more time-consuming requests will incur a treatment call client fee.

Additional information about fees can be found on Pirha's website: pirha.fi/asiakasmaksut.

For non-urgent matters, you can also send us a message via OmaTays in the Hoitokeskustelu (Treatment discussion) section by signing into omatays.fi using your online banking credentials.