



Patient & Family Guide

2024

UVB Phototherapy



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UVB Phototherapy

Your dermatologist (skin doctor) has ordered ultraviolet B (UVB) phototherapy (light therapy) for your skin. UVB phototherapy is used to treat many skin conditions.

How does UVB phototherapy work?

- UVB light can lower inflammation in your skin.
- There are 2 types of UVB light used in phototherapy:
 - › Broadband UVB
 - › Narrowband UVB
- Your dermatologist will choose the type of phototherapy that is right for your skin condition.
- Before starting phototherapy treatments, you will be assessed by the phototherapy team. They will decide the amount of light that is right for you.
- Treatments are usually done over 4 to 6 weeks (1 to 1 ½ months) and may last up to 8 weeks (2 months). This will depend on how your skin responds to the treatments.

How do I get ready for my treatments?

- Some medications may raise your risk of getting a sunburn. Please tell a member of your phototherapy team if you are taking any new medications (including puffers, patches, injections, creams, and over-the-counter or herbal products) or if your prescribed medications change.

- **Before each treatment:**

- › Put sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher on all sensitive areas (like nipples, lips).
- › Cover your genitals with underwear or an athletic garment (jock strap).
- › Cover any other areas of skin that are not being treated with clothes or towels.

What will happen during the treatments?

- We will give you special eye protection to wear during your treatments.
- Your first treatments will be very short (from seconds to minutes long). Over time, each treatment will get longer.
- It is important to raise your treatment times slowly to prevent a skin burn.

What will happen after the treatments?

- During your treatment period, your phototherapy team and a dermatologist will check your skin to:
 - › see how you are responding to the treatments.
 - › decide if you need changes to your treatment plan.

• **Do not tan (outdoors or in a tanning bed) during your treatment period.**

- If you use prescribed creams, you can use them after your treatment period is done.

What are the possible risks?

- The most common risk is a skin burn.
- Less common risks include:
 - › A burn on your cornea (part of your eye)
 - › Freckles
 - › Skin aging
 - › Higher risk of skin cancers

It is important to tell your phototherapy team if you have redness, burning, or stinging that does not go away within 24 hours (1 day) of treatment. If this happens, they will change your treatment plan.

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:
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Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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