



Pre-Treatment Instructions for Photodynamic Therapy (PDT)

This treatment is designed to help decrease the number of pre-cancers called actinic keratoses (AKs).

Depending on the length of Levulan incubation and the amount of sun damage you have incurred over your lifetime, you can expect to have a sunburn-like reaction that usually lasts about 7 days. Swelling, peeling, crusting and discomfort may occur. Some patients may have a more exuberant response to PDT than others and experience a much more severe sunburn-like effect. If this happens, the healing time is usually longer, up to 4 weeks.

Preparation for PDT

1. On the day of treatment please come to the office with CLEAN SKIN and the treatment area free of any makeup, creams, perfumes or lotions.
2. Bring some type of sun protective clothing to protect you from the sun on your ride home. We suggest bringing at least sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat and a scarf. If you're having your hands or arms treated you will need gloves and long sleeves. The risks of side effects (swelling, redness, peeling, crusting and discomfort) increase dramatically with ANY sun exposure, including, INDIRECT exposure in the 48 hours following treatment. Plan to cover-up prior to leaving the office. Please avoid sun exposure for 2 weeks prior to the treatment.
3. Plan to be here for about 2.5 hours. Following your treatment you will be required to go directly home with the treated area covered. You may consider having someone drive you and/or pick you up to allow you to apply cold compresses if you have a long ride home.
4. If you have a history of herpes simplex virus outbreaks ("cold sores" or "fever blisters") in the areas being treated, make sure to let us know so we can prescribe medication to minimize the possibility of an outbreak after treatment.
5. Please tell us if you have any contraindications to PDT or Blue Light Therapy: including pregnancy, porphyria, allergies or hypersensitivity to porphyrins or Levulan, PDT, or 400-450 nm blue light.

6. Discontinue use of any topical vitamin A products (retinoids or related derivatives) such as Differin, Epiduo, tretinoin (Retin-A) and Tazorac for one week before PDT. You may restart these medications when fully healed, typically 2-3 weeks post PDT.

7. Please let us know if you are taking any of the following medications as they might make your reaction more severe and increase your side effects: griseofulvin, thiazide diuretics (examples include anything ending in “*thiazide*” like hydrochloro*thiazide*, and metolazone), sulfonamides (sulfamethoxazole/trimethoprim compounds like Bactrim or Septra), phenothiazines (medications ending in “azine;” these are anti-psychotic medications), and tetracyclines (doxycycline, tetracycline, minocycline).

8. For anyone with thick, dense hair in the planned treatment area, the treatment area should be shaved the day before treatment and then again the day of treatment before you come into the office. You should not shave the treated area for at least 5 days after treatment.

9. Please note that the most common side effects of treatment include scaling/crusting, lightening and/or darkening of the skin called hypo/hyper-pigmentation and itching. These symptoms usually go away after 7 days but may persist for several weeks.

9. You will need to have the following at home to use after treatment:

- A very mild facial cleanser like CeraVe, Cetaphil or Aveeno
- A high quality sunblock of at least SPF 30 (zinc and/or titanium dioxide >10%)
- A good, thick moisturizing cream, such as CeraVe, Cetaphil, Eucerin, Aveeno
- A new container of Vaseline pure petrolatum ointment that is placed in the refrigerator and q-tips or tongue depressors to remove ointment from the container for application to your skin. It is important to keep the container of Vaseline uncontaminated by bacteria (dirty fingers, etc.).
- You may need to take a pain reliever such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen, especially for the first few days after treatment.
- Be prepared to take some 'downtime'. You will be extremely photosensitive and will need to remain out of direct AND indirect sunlight and even bright artificial light sources (lamps, etc.) even when you're indoors. Plan to stay inside during daylight hours for 48 hours. Vigilantly protect your treated skin from light for the first 48 hours after treatment. Prepare for indoor activities. Do any shopping in advance.