

PDT (PhotoDynamic Therapy Treatments)

At Advanced Dermatology & Cosmetic Care our providers are well-experienced with PhotoDynamic Therapy (PDT) treatments.

PDT is a non-invasive procedure used to treat a variety of skin conditions. It is a special treatment performed with a topical photosensitizing agent called Levulan (5-aminolevulinic acid or ALA), which is activated with the correct wavelength of light. This treatment is also commonly referred to as “ALA or PDT treatment”, Levulan photofacial or Photodynamic Acne Therapy.

What does PDT treat?

Acne and rosacea can now be treated by PhotoDynamic Therapy (PDT) with amazing results. The PDT can treat the following conditions with no downtime and minimal risk:

- Reduce acne
- Reduce rosacea
- Reduce sebaceous gland hyperplasia
- Reduce or eliminates use of oral antibiotics
- Eliminate concerns of antibiotic-resistant bacteria



How does PDT work?

Photodynamic therapy (PDT) for the treatment of acne and other skin diseases involves the use of photochemical reactions to photosensitizing agents, light, and oxygen. PDT involves two steps. First, the photo-sensitizer is applied to the skin surface and taken up by the acne lesions. Then a specific wavelength of blue light is directed toward the acne lesions, activating the photo-sensitizer in the presence of oxygen.



Because the photo-sensitizer is preferentially absorbed by the acne lesions and the light source is directly targeted on the lesional tissue, PDT achieves dual selectivity, minimizing damage to adjacent healthy structures. PDT is mediated by oxygen-dependent photochemical reactions, resulting in destruction of the acne lesion.

The purpose of lasers in PDT is to initiate photochemical reactions, and not to heat or mechanically change tissue as seen in other dermatologic uses.

Photodynamic Therapy Frequently Asked Questions



What is photodynamic therapy?

PDT is used to treat sun damage, pre-cancerous regions on the skin (actinic keratosis), acne and rosacea. It is performed by placing the topical photosensitizing agent Levulan on the treatment area, which is activated with a specific wavelength of light. This treatment corrects the damaged skin.

Who is a good candidate for PDT?

Patients with the following conditions are good candidates for PDT treatments:

- Sun damaged skin
- Actinic keratosis
- Rosacea
- Acne

How many PDT treatments will I need?

Many patients need multiple PDT treatments, but the number of treatments depends on what problem you are trying to correct. In many cases, patients will have 4-6 treatments. During a consultation with one of our expert aesthetic consultants, we will assess your needs and determine how many treatments you will need.

How does PDT work for precancerous lesions?

PDT kills cancer cells by combining a light sensitive drug with light from a laser. The treatment allows our doctors to target and destroy cancer cells without damaging the surrounding healthy skin.

What are the advantages of PDT for treating skin pre-cancer?

The benefit of PDT for treating skin pre-cancerous lesions is its ability to target specific areas. PDT also decreases the risk of skin discoloration that is often caused by routine freezing with liquid nitrogen. Additionally, there is minimal downtime after a PDT treatment.

How much downtime should I expect after a PDT treatment?

Most patients experience minimal downtime after photodynamic therapy treatments. However stronger PDT treatments can cause some redness and peeling. You should avoid heavy sunlight for about a week, and you should wear a protective sunscreen.

What are the side effects of PDT?

PDT side effects are minimal. Some patients experience redness immediately after the treatment, but it will go away within a day or two. However, as with all laser procedures side effects can include swelling, inflammation, redness and tenderness around the treatment area. Peeling may also occur.

How much does PDT cost?

The cost of PDT varies from patient to patient depending on the goals of the treatment. To find out how much your PDT treatment will cost, schedule a consultation with one of our aesthetic consultants.

What is levulan?

Levulan is a photosensitizing substance that has been approved by the FDA for the treatment of actinic keratosis. Levulan is activated by light to treat skin pre-cancers, sun damage, acne and rosacea.

Please contact Advanced Dermatology & Cosmetic Care at 661.254.3686 for more information about PDT and to schedule a consultation. You can also email us through our inquiry portal [here](#). We are located in Valencia, Ca.