

Blue Light Therapy



Photodynamic Therapy

(PDT) or Blu-U® Blue Light Therapy

PhotoDynamic Therapy™ (PDT) is a special treatment performed with a topical photosensitizing agent called Levulan® Kerastick® (5-aminolevulinic acid or ALA) activated with the correct wavelength of light. This is also known as "ALA/Blue Light treatment". These treatments remove sun damaged pre-cancerous zones and pre-cancerous lesions called actinic keratoses. Sun damage, fine lines and blotchy pigmentation are also improved because of the positive effect of Levulan® and the light treatment. ALA/Blue Light treatment also has the unique ability to minimize pores and reduce oil glands (sebaceous hyperplasia), effectively treating stubborn acne vulgaris, acne rosacea, and improve the appearance of some acne scars. Levulan® is a naturally occurring photosensitizing compound, which has been approved by the FDA to treat pre-cancerous skin lesions called actinic keratosis as well as for the treatment of moderate inflammatory acne vulgaris. Levulan® is applied to the skin and subsequently "activated" by specific wavelengths of light, such as the Blu-U®Blue Light. This process of activating Levulan® is to reduce the number of pre-cancerous lesions. Other effects are to reduce acne rosacea, acne vulgaris, sebaceous hyperplasia, decrease oiliness of the skin, and improve texture and smoothness by minimizing pore size. The improvements of these skin conditions (other than actinic keratosis) are considered an "off label" use of Levulan® and are NOT covered by insurance.

How much improvement can I expect?

Patients with severe sun damaged skin manifested by actinic keratosis, texture, and tone changes including mottled pigmentation and skin laxity may see excellent results. In studies, at 8 weeks after 1 Blu-U®Blue Light Therapy, 77% of patients experienced 75% clearance of AK lesions. You may also see improvement of large pores, acne, and sebaceous hyperplasia.

How many treatments will I need and how often?

To achieve maximum improvement of pre-cancerous (actinic keratosis) sun damage, skin tone and texture, a series of 2-3 treatments 8 weeks apart is the most effective. Some patients with only actinic keratosis are happy with just one treatment.

What can I expect during and after the procedure?

Application of the Levulan® will be brief. You will then need to sit for the designated time in our waiting area (approximately 1-2 hours) to allow the medication to be absorbed. After the

wait time, you will be placed under the Blu-U® Blue Light for approximately 16 minutes. During the light treatment, you may experience sensations of tingling, stinging, prickling or burning. These feelings of discomfort should improve at the end of the treatment and should subside between 1 minute to 24 hours after the Blu-U® Light is turned off. Following treatment, the treated AKs and surrounding skin may become red, swollen, and scaly. These effects are temporary and should completely resolve in 1-4 weeks.

Are there any special precautions I need to take before my treatment?

Remember this treatment requires downtime for 3-7 days so plan ahead with work, social life, and your everyday to day activities. Stop using any retinoid/retinol 3 days prior to treatment. The following precautions need to be taken after the procedure: strict avoidance of sunlight for 48 hours by staying indoors, wearing an SPF 30+ containing Zinc Oxide or Titanium Dioxide, and wearing a hat with 3" brim. If you have a history of fever blisters, make sure to inform Dr. Germain, Holly Carter, PA-C or staff. You will need to have a prescription of Valtrex filled BEFORE your treatment. Bring with you a hat and scarf, and anything to lessen your exposure to other light sources when you leave our office. We do not prescribe pain medications to take before treatments, so if you tend to be sensitive take over the counter pain medication prior to treatment.

Photodynamic therapy by external application of light to destroy premalignant and/or malignant lesions of the skin

and adjacent mucosa (e.g. lip) by activation of photosensitive drug(s), each phototherapy exposure session

Is there any post procedure care?

You will need the following:

- Strict avoidance of sunlight for 48 hours
- A large hat (3" Brim) and scarf to protect you from light when leaving the office
- A sun block based of Zinc Oxide or Titanium Dioxide (i.e. Blue Lizard Sensitive**, Germain Rx Ultra Protect**, TIZO**)
- Post-Procedure Balm (i.e. Aquaphor or Recovery Dressing**) for the first 3 days
- Heavy Moisturizer (i.e. CeraVe Cream or Lite Recovery Dressing**) until peeling stops