

REVERSE SUN DAMAGE AND TREAT ACNE

Dr. Gidon's clinic was the first in Ontario to offer Photodynamic Therapy with Levulan® and the Blu-U® light to help reverse sun damage and treat acne. Photodynamic therapy (PDT) is a special treatment that uses a photosensitizing agent called Levulan® (aminolevulinic acid HCl) that is applied to skin and then activated with a light source. The Levulan® is absorbed by actively proliferating cells such as bacteria, oil glands and sun damaged cells. The light source used may be a visible blue light, intense pulsed light or laser light. It activates the Levulan® in the targeted cells which are then destroyed. Bacteria are destroyed, oil glands shrink and sun damaged cells peel away. Skin texture is improved, pore size is reduced, and skin appears smoother, brighter and healthier. Recently, a new medication called Metvix® cream (methyl aminolevulinate) activated by Aktelite®, a red light, has been approved to treat pre-cancerous growths and superficial basal cell carcinomas of the skin.

What conditions can be treated?

- Sun damage: face, neck, shoulders, back, chest, hands, arms and legs
- Acne, oily skin and enlarged pores
- Rosacea
- Keratosis pilaris (tiny bumps on cheeks and the back of arms)

How is PDT used?

The skin is cleansed and Levulan® is applied and left on for 30 to 60 minutes. It is then activated by a light source, usually the Blu-U®, for a few minutes and then washed off. Three to 5 treatments, 2 to 4 weeks apart are usually required.

Is it uncomfortable?

There may be a feeling of warmth or occasionally a mild stinging, but it is well tolerated.

What happens after treatment?

Patients are more sensitive to the sun for 36 hours after treatment and must avoid direct light. There may be mild swelling around the eyes for 1 day and redness and peeling for about 7 to 10 days. Mild cleansers and moisturizers are used until peeling stops. Sunscreen is mandatory. If you are prone to facial cold sores, Dr. Gidon will prescribe antiviral medication to prevent a recurrence.

What are the advantages of this treatment?

Photorejuvenation for sun damage is evident within a week of treatment, with minimal discomfort. Precancerous spots that are too small to be detected can be treated early. Acne can be improved without taking oral medication.

Who should not have this treatment?

Patients who are pregnant or nursing or who have sun sensitive skin conditions such as lupus should not have this treatment.

When is the Blu-U® light used without Levulan®?

Since the Blu-U® light destroys bacteria that aggravate acne, mild to moderate acne can be improved with just the light. Treatment involves sitting in front of the light for a few minutes twice a week for 4 weeks. It is safe and painless and can be used together with prescribed acne medication, light chemical peels and facials.

Dr. Gidon can assess your skin condition and formulate an individualized treatment plan to rejuvenate your skin and keep it healthy and beautiful.