

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR HAND AND FOOT PUVA

PUVA treatment refers to the combination of a light sensitizing medicine, Psoralen, and long wave length ultra-violet light (UVA). By itself UVA does not affect the skin. It is the combination of psoralen and UVA that has a powerful effect on the skin. PUVA treatment is not a cure: it is a method to control your disease.

We treat with carefully monitored light sources. Sunlight is not suitable for treatment since it is an unpredictable source of UVA and also contains the sunburning rays of ultraviolet B. Severe burns may occur with psoralen-sensitized skin is exposed to sunlight.

Tanning or appearance of brown spots is common with PUVA treatment, and there may even be an occasional sunburn. There is also an increased risk of precancerous (or, rarely cancerous) growths of the skin in the treated areas.

Please carefully follow the steps described below:

1. 30-60 minutes prior to light treatment 8-methoxypsoralen cream or lotion is applied to the involved skin areas. If applied to hands, gloves may be worn in order to prevent inadvertent transfer of medication to the face or other parts of the body. Be extremely careful to apply only to involved skin. Do not allow any medicine on the normal skin if at all possible.
2. When you are ready to begin light treatment protect your eyes with the special UVA absorbing goggles which we shall provide. Move your hands or feet every 15-30 seconds so that all the rash areas get an even amount of light.
3. After treatment, wash with gentle soap and water to remove residual medication. Apply SPF 30 or greater sunscreen several times per day. Gloves may also be worn.
4. Exposure of treated skin to sunlight following application of topical psoralen must be prevented; avoid sunlight exposure even through window glass for 24 hours after psoralen application, and use sunscreen frequently. You may be more sensitive to sunlight even on the days you did not receive treatment.
5. Moisturizers such as CeraVe, Aquaphor, etc may be used as often as necessary for dryness. Scales may be gently removed with bathing.
6. If the skin is red, tender, or feels burned, please inform the nurse or physician.
7. Please give the physician a list of all medications being taken. If any new drugs are prescribed during PUVA therapy, please inform the physician or nurse.
8. Ideally, light treatments should be given every other day. There is potential for burning if done more often. It may take 25 or more treatments before a response is seen.

If you have any questions please contact our office.