



PATIENT INFORMATION

# TOPICAL PUVA TREATMENT



## **What is topical PUVA treatment?**

Topical PUVA treatment involves application of the drug psoralen to the skin. Psoralen is absorbed and activated by UVA light which is given in a strictly monitored dose. The psoralen is contained in an emulsion, gel or lotion. Several different skin diseases can be treated effectively with PUVA, including psoriasis. Treatment is usually carried out 2-3 times a week.

### **Practical points:**

1. Do not use any skin treatment during the course of PUVA except that prescribed for you. Avoid using perfumed substances on the skin before your treatment as these can make the skin more sensitive to the light.
2. You will be asked about any medication that you may be taking before you start treatment. If you start taking any tablets or there are any changes to your tablet treatment during your PUVA course, please inform the nurse.
3. During your course of treatment you should not sunbathe or use a sunbed. Do not expose PUVA treated skin to sunlight for 24 hours after using the psoralen, for example, avoid sitting near windows as UVA will pass through glass. Also wear gloves whilst driving or gardening. Treated areas may remain sensitive for 2-3 days.
4. It is very important not to touch other areas, especially your face whilst the psoralen is on your hands and you're waiting for the UVA treatment. This unnecessarily increases the area of skin which will be sensitive to the light.
5. You will be given special goggles to wear to protect the eyes. These must not be removed during treatment.
6. Female patients should not plan pregnancy during a course of treatment. If pregnancy occurs, tell us immediately. It is safer not to breast feed while having treatment.

### **Side effects:**

Occasional side effects may occur during treatment. These include:

- a. A sunburn like reaction. This particularly affects those with a fair complexion.
- b. Skin dryness - this is easily improved by using moisturising creams.

For treatment to be effective, it is important that you attend regularly. If you miss 2 appointments without informing us, your treatment will be cancelled.

If you have any problems following treatment, please contact the nursing staff on:-

Alexandra Hospital  
Tel: 01527 503030  
Ext: 44518

Worcester Royal Hospital  
01905 760275

An answerphone is available so please leave a message giving your name and telephone number and someone will get back to you.

**If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.**

### **Patient Experience**

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

### **Feedback**

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

### **How to contact PALS:**

**Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: [wah-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:wah-tr.PET@nhs.net)**

### **Opening times:**

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.