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PHOTODYNAMIC THERAPY (PDT)

What is photodynamic therapy?

Photodynamic therapy is a special treatment using a photosensitizing agent (levulan) and a blue light. This treatment removes precancerous lesions called actinic keratoses.

What can expect during my visit?

The procedure is fairly simple and well tolerated. You can anticipate being here for about 2 hours. First, your skin is cleansed to remove excess oil. A solution of levulan is applied and left on to incubate for at least one hour. *Please bring something to read or music to listen to while you are waiting.* After an hour, you'll either lay or sit comfortably while the nurse positions the blue light around you. Goggles will be given to you to protect your eyes from the light. The actual light treatment lasts 17 minutes. During this time, you may experience feeling hot, but overall, PDT is well tolerated. Immediately afterwards, you may wash your face with a gentle cleanser and cool water.

What is the recovery?

The treated area may appear red and peel for up to 2 weeks. You may also experience some itching and temporary swelling of the lips and around your eyes that can occur for a few days. Darker pigmentation can become darker and then peel off, leaving normal skin which may take up to 7-10 days.

What do I need to do after the procedure?

It is important to avoid sun exposure, bright windows, and bright indoor lighting for 48 hours. Exposure may cause redness (like a sunburn) and swelling of the skin and prolong the recovery period. You should protect your skin by wearing a wide brimmed hat (***please bring one with you at the time of your treatment***) and a thick coat of sun block with an SPF of 30 or more. Use *gentle cleansers and moisturizers* to help alleviate some of the itching that can occur. *You may pick some up at the pharmacy before you leave.* Hydrocortisone cream can be applied three times daily for the first 1-2 days.

You will need to schedule a follow up 2 weeks after treatment.

When do I need to call my physician?

Please call if you experience any of the following: severe pain, open/weeping skin, blisters, temperature > 100.5.

(801)779-6200