

## Photodynamic Therapy (PDT)

### Patient Information Treatment Preparation

- Your provider has recommended treating your actinic keratoses (AKs) with photodynamic therapy (PDT) using Levulan® Kerastick + Blue-U light (levulan.com). This procedure leaves your skin *extremely sensitive* to outdoor and bright indoor fluorescent lighting *for 48 hours after your treatment*; therefore, please schedule your appointment to allow you to **AVOID ALL OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES FOR THE 48 HOURS AFTER THE TREATMENT SESSION**, including sitting by windows and driving, except for driving to and from your appointment at our office.
- Please make sure your provider is aware if you are susceptible to cold sores/fever blisters in the treatment areas. You may be instructed to take an antiviral medication (valacyclovir / Valtrex) before your scheduled treatment.
- If you have thick hair in the treatment area, please shave 2 days prior to your treatment. Do not shave on the day of treatment since the Levulan® therapy may cause more of a reaction in the areas of open sores or small microscopic cuts.
- On the day of your treatment be advised to **bring a hat, wide-brimmed preferred, and sunglasses** to protect your skin on your trip home. If you are getting your arms treated, **please bring a long sleeve shirt**.
- Please arrive at the appointment wearing no makeup, creams (including sunscreen), or topical medications to the area being treated.
- **Please plan to be at our office for at least 1 hour on the day of treatment.**
- Of note, **you will have 2 treatments, spaced 4 weeks apart**. This procedure is done in our Hammonton and Marlton locations ONLY.



### Day of Treatment Checklist:

- Start taking Valtrex/valacyclovir 500mg 2 tabs PO BID x 3 days if you have a history of cold sores and your face or scalp is being treated.
- Bring a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses if your face or scalp is being treated
- Bring a long-sleeved shirt if your arms are being treated

## The Treatment

1. **Application:** The technician will first cleanse the area to be treated. Next, the provider will debulk thicker lesions with sandpaper. The medication (Levulan®) will then be applied to your skin, sometimes followed by Saran Wrap, used to occlude the area to allow for better penetration.
2. **Incubation:** You will then sit with the medicine on for a designated period of time (0 to 90 minutes). During this time, the medication will penetrate in to the damaged skin areas.
3. **Light Treatment:** You will return to the treatment area. You will then be seated comfortably in front of the blue light and protective goggles will be placed to protect your eyes from the light. The technician will then start the light treatment. This step takes **16 to 30 minutes**. You may experience discomfort or itching during this process. **The discomfort usually peaks at 3 minutes** and then improves during the treatment.

## Aftercare

- After your treatment is finished, a sunscreen will be applied to the treated area. You should cover the treated area with hat or long-sleeved shirt for your drive home.
- Areas treated will generally crust over in several days. Most patients experience discomfort for several hours following the light treatment procedure, slowly resolving thereafter.
- Mild to moderate redness / swelling is not uncommon the first day or two after PDT and can be lessened by application of an ice pack or frozen peas in their bag. Applying cool packs or ice every 5 to 15 minutes every hour for the first 8 to 24 hours after your procedure may be very soothing. Swelling may be more common for procedures around the eyes or lips. Sleeping propped up on a few pillows or in a reclining chair may help decrease swelling after treatment of the head and face area.
- If you have no contraindications, you may take an over-the-counter pain medication such as ibuprofen (Motrin®; Advil®) or acetaminophen (Tylenol®) as needed for pain/discomfort.
- Use sunscreen, mild cleansers, Vaseline, and moisturizers for 4-7 days after the treatment to minimize discomfort and promote healing.
- Avoid picking or scrubbing the treated skin as this could cause severe irritation or scarring.
- **Avoid sun exposure for the next 48 hours.** Also avoid exposure to bright indoor light and sun exposure through window glass including while driving. Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in severe skin reactions and potential scarring.
- Make sure to keep your follow-up appointment so that your provider can evaluate the post-treatment lesions.

*Please call our office at (856) 596-0111 or message us on Klara at (856) 481-7851 with any questions or concerns.*