



## DR KWAN ZHENLI

CONSULTANT DERMATOLOGIST AND MOHS  
SURGEON

---

# NARROWBAND ULTRAVIOLET B PHOTOTHERAPY

### 1. What is Ultraviolet B (UVB)?

Ultraviolet B (UVB) light is the most common form of phototherapy used to treat various skin diseases, including psoriasis, eczema and itching. You will be exposed to this high-energy UV light for a varying length of time. This treatment is not a cure but can effectively control or improve your disease. Patients have used this treatment successfully for many years and often are able to maintain clearance of improved skin over extended periods of time.

### 2. How long will treatment last?

Each condition and patient will vary in the number of treatments needed per week and the time it will take to reach clearing. Most patients initially required three to five treatments each week to clear their lesions. Typically, treatments start with only a few seconds of light exposure and increase gradually as determined by the staff. It may take 15-25 treatments or longer to improve your disease. Not all patients will clear completely. Many patients go into remission and may then stop treatments.

### 3. What are the expected benefits of phototherapy?

- Improvement of existing lesions.
- Reduction of new lesions.
- Remission – in many cases phototherapy has resulted in a near-total clearing of the disease process. The duration of this remission varies with each patient. Maintenance therapy may be required.

The information provided in this document is intended as an resource only and should not be used as a substitute for professional diagnosis and treatment. Please consult your health care provider before making any health care decisions or for guidance about a specific medical condition.



## DR KWAN ZHENLI

CONSULTANT DERMATOLOGIST AND MOHS  
SURGEON

---

### NARROWBAND ULTRAVIOLET B PHOTOTHERAPY

#### **4. What are the risks and side effects of phototherapy?**

- The most common side-effect of this therapy is UVB-induced sunburn. This may occur at any time during the therapy. Certain drugs may also cause you to get sunburn. Please let your doctor/nurse know of any medications you are taking, or any that you begin while undergoing therapy.
- It is possible with any form of UV light that an increased incidence of skin cancer may occur later in some patients, usually only with many UV light treatments.
- UV treatments may cause dryness and itching.
- UV treatments age the skin over time and may increase freckles and pigmentation of the skin.
- UV rays may damage the eyes and increase your risk of cataracts. This is preventable with protective eye goggles worn during treatment. These will be given to you and are required for treatment.
- UV light may cause a flare of fever, blisters and mouth sores in susceptible people.
- Long-term UV exposure to the unprotected genital area in men may cause an increase in genital cancer. Therefore, all men will wear an athletic supporter while in the light box.
- UV light may cause exacerbation of other medical conditions, such as lupus erythematosus, which have sensitivity to UV wavelength.

#### **5. How is treatment carried out?**

Ultraviolet B (UVB) phototherapy involves standing in a light box, a closed-in cubicle that is lined with ultraviolet lights. You will not be locked into the light cabinet. You may open the doors and exit the booth at any time during the treatment. In the beginning, treatment sessions may last around 20 seconds. Treatment times slowly increase, depending on patient tolerance and skin disease being treated. If you are using the hands-and-feet unit, you will be positioned appropriately at the machine.

The information provided in this document is intended as an resource only and should not be used as a substitute for professional diagnosis and treatment. Please consult your health care provider before making any health care decisions or for guidance about a specific medical condition.



**DR KWAN ZHENLI**  
CONSULTANT DERMATOLOGIST AND MOHS  
SURGEON

---

## NARROWBAND ULTRAVIOLET B PHOTOTHERAPY

### **6. Please follow the guidelines given below to assure a smooth and productive treatment experience:**

- Males are required to wear an athletic supporter while in the light box. Females will undress completely for their treatment unless otherwise instructed by their physician.
- You will be given a pair of protective eye goggles. You are required to wear them during the light exposure.
- While you are in the light cabinet, stand in the middle at a normal stance. The lights are on all panels plus reflector sheets, which dispense the light rays for uniform exposure.
- For psoriasis patients, apply mineral oil to your skin prior to exposure to the light. This will decrease dryness and enhance the effectiveness of the light.
- Please notify the staff of any redness and/or tenderness you have during your treatment. At home, cool compresses and aspirin are helpful for mild sunburn reactions.
- Notify the staff if you begin any new medications during your treatment, as certain medications affect your sensitivity to UV light.
- All patients should use moisturisers frequently.
- Avoid additional sunlight on the day of treatment to prevent burning.
- Children undergoing UVB must be accompanied by a parent.

The information provided in this document is intended as an resource only and should not be used as a substitute for professional diagnosis and treatment. Please consult your health care provider before making any health care decisions or for guidance about a specific medical condition.