

Phototherapy

Phototherapy is a treatment commonly used for psoriasis, eczema, itching, vitiligo and many other skin conditions. There are different types of phototherapy treatments available. We use Narrow Band Ultraviolet B light. We have a full body unit for conditions that involve the body. We also have a light box that only treats the hands and feet. Narrow Band Ultraviolet B (NBUVB) light is felt to be the safest light available (safer than UVA). Narrow band means that a specific portion of UV light that has been determined to be the most effective (beneficial) portion of the UVB spectrum is utilized for your treatment. So, NBUVB is a specific wavelength of light that is very effective and as safe as possible (a lot of the harmful rays are not used). NBUVB is much more specific than a tanning bed.

The light treatments work by suppressing the inflammatory cells in the skin (which are causing the disease, itching, rash, etc). Treatments are typically 2-3 times a week. If you cannot be consistent about coming to your treatments, then the light will not be very helpful for you. The treatments themselves will last only seconds to minutes. You can expect to be in and out of the office in about 20 minutes. Make sure you do not apply sunscreen to any areas of your body that need treatment prior to your office visits. We do recommend wearing sunscreen after your treatments. It is important to wear the exact same garments during your light treatment every visit as the dose of light will be increased most visits. If you have any concerns about your treatment, please let us know.

Phototherapy with NBUVB light is felt to be relatively safe. Potential side effects include a sunburn, freckling of the skin, aging of the skin, and a possible increased risk of skin cancer. However, freckling, aging and cancer risks are felt to be lower with UVB light as compared to UVA light (tanning beds are mostly UVA). All patients are required to wear eye protection. This is to prevent any potential damage to your eyes with the light treatments.

It typically takes multiple treatment sessions to see results from the phototherapy. This will vary from person to person and between different conditions treated.

If you have any further questions regarding your phototherapy treatments, please do not hesitate to call our office at 205-682-8022.