

TREATMENT OF SUN SPOTS USING PDT - ALA

How PDT - ALA works

- Photodynamic Therapy (PDT) is a treatment that uses light to activate a photosensitising agent called aminolaevulinic acid (ALA). ALA is an anticancer agent that absorbs into the skin and concentrates in malignant cells and rapidly growing cells such as sun spots. Very little is absorbed into normal skin cells. Once activated by the light source, ALA causes destruction of these cells.
- This treatment method allows specific areas of the skin to be treated, causing little or no damage to the normal skin and resulting in minimal down time for the patient.

Who should NOT have treatment with ALA?

- Pregnant or breastfeeding women.
- People with porphyria tumour.

Preparation before the procedure

- You will be prescribed a skin peeling cream to apply for three weeks to soften any scale. The peeling is very gentle with no or minimal inflammation. Do not use on the morning of your procedure.
- Just before your appointment, thoroughly wash your face with soap at home.

The procedure

- Any remaining skin scale will be lifted with a skin curette.
- ALA solution is applied to the treatment area.
- The ALA takes around one hour to penetrate the cells. You must wait in a dark room to avoid light activation of the ALA prior to it entering the skin cells.
- After one hour you may go home.

Daylight activation

- Activation of the ALA is simply by natural light. You must sit outside in a position that gets bright light but not direct sun.
- Apply a chemical sunscreen (without titanium or zinc) during the summer months.
- The activation will take two hours (or three hours if raining).
- Afterwards, shower and wash any residual ALA off your skin.
- Expect your face to become inflamed after three to six hours. It will be sore to touch for up to three days.
- The degree of reaction depends on the amount of sun damage present.

Home instructions

- A painkiller and cortisone cream will be prescribed but are usually not required.
- Application of a moisturiser is encouraged from day one.
- During the first four days, your face will look very inflamed, swollen and can be painful to touch, as if you have been sun burnt. The skin will start peeling after three or four days, and continue until around day seven. It is very common to feel a burning or stinging sensation, as well as some crusting, swelling, and redness.
- Sun exposure must be avoided for seven days. After this, care should still be taken when going outdoors by wearing a wide brim hat and sunscreen.
- The treated areas should have settled completely after two weeks.
- You should take between four and seven days off work.

Notes:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact us.