

Phototherapy MED test

This sheet explains the MED test for patients recommended for phototherapy. Please sign it to say you have read and understood what to expect in the test.

The MED test is a test on your skin to determine your starting dose in the phototherapy cabinet – to test what your skin can tolerate so we know how much light to give you to begin with. (MED stands for Minimal Erythema Dose – the smallest amount of light that provokes some sunburn on your skin.)

The test consists of placing a hand-held device on your skin that gives out 10 measured doses of light. We then need to check your skin 18-24 hours later, when the skin has had time to react, so we can choose the most appropriate starting dose for you.

In order to know how long to leave the device on your skin we need to determine your skin type according to a scale from Type 1 to Type 6, so we will ask you questions about how your skin reacts to normal sunlight. These will be about whether you burn in the sun, tan easily or perhaps never tan.

We need to test an area of skin that is clear of disease and usually not exposed to the sun. Preferred sites are the upper back away from the spine, flank or abdomen, upper thigh or possibly the inner forearm.

The following day we will expect to see a number of pink squares, ranging from darker to lighter. We take your reading as the lightest possible square that we can see and start your treatment at 70% of that amount. (There are a very few exceptions to this and if you fall into one of these categories we will explain further.) This means that we begin your treatment low enough not to burn you and high enough to be effective as quickly as possible.

Very occasionally, one or two of the squares may feel a little sunburnt and will be quite red. If this happens, we will treat as necessary and possibly delay starting treatment for a couple of days to allow time for the skin to settle. You should also be aware that the test areas may develop brownish hyperpigmentation – a colour deposit in the skin that shows where the skin was a little inflamed. This will fade, but can take weeks or months to do so. We will always try to choose a test area that does not show under normal circumstances. The MED test is considered by leading phototherapists and consultants to be best way of deciding on the level of light therapy to be effective in treating your condition.

I confirm that I have read and understood the above information.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____