

QUEENSLAND OCULAR ONCOLOGY SERVICE

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PHOTODYNAMIC THERAPY (PDT)

What is PDT (Photodynamic Therapy)?

Photodynamic therapy (PDT) uses a combination of the Verteporfin, also known as 'Visudyne' (a light-activated drug) and light from a non-thermal, painless low energy laser. The goal of this treatment is to eliminate any fluid and/or shrink the lesion.

What does the treatment involve?

An intravenous (IV) cannula will be placed inside the vein. Visudyne is delivered over 10 minutes intravenously.

Once the infusion ends, there is 5 minutes before the laser treatment begins and usually takes between 5 – 10 minutes to perform.

You can expect to be at the clinic for up to 2 hours and you are not required to fast for this treatment.

Will my vision be effected from this treatment?

Prior to your PDT your vision may have been effected by fluid produced by the lesion. Following your treatment your vision may improve as a result of the fluid being absorbed. However it is important to note that, in some cases in order to treat the lesion it can have short term and permanent visual loss.

Will my eye be painful?

The procedure is generally painless, but you may experience some pain in the following 48 hours as a consequence of the lesion responding to the treatment.

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What are the possible risks, complications or side effects of PDT?

IV Site:

- Rash
- Bruising
- Leaking of Fluid at Infusion Site

Ocular:

- Blurred Vision (Short Term or Permanent)
- Visual Field Defects
- Double Vision
- Dry Eyes
- Irritation

Other:

- Back Pain / Chest Pain
- Headache / Dizziness / Nausea / Fainting
- Photosensitivity (in the form of sunburn)
- Severe Allergic Reaction (causing death)
- Hearing Issues

Why do I have to avoid sunlight following treatment?

Patients who receive Visudyne will become temporarily photosensitive after the infusion and are to avoid direct sunlight for 3 days. Day 1 starting the day after the infusion. During that period, you should avoid exposure of unprotected skin and eyes to direct sunlight.

If necessary to go outdoors you should wear dark sunglasses and protective clothing (long sleeves, long pants, hat and if needed gloves.) – Please note that UV sunscreens are not effective in protecting against photosensitivity reactions.