

## Health Views New Acne Therapy

Q. My acne is very resistant to my medications. What about new therapies?

A. Photodynamic therapy for acne is very exciting and cutting edge. At less cost than Accutane, a chemical precursor of hemoglobin called amino levulinate, is placed on the skin. After a period of 30 to 60 minutes, the chemical is absorbed and selectively picked up by the problem oil glands. With eye protection, intense monochromatic blue light at 417 nm, and intense pulse light 560nm to 1200nm, is used to shut down the problem oil glands. The Photodynamic therapy shrinks overactive oil glands and sterilizes the oil gland of the problem bacteria, P. acnes.

Five treatments are performed at 2-3 week intervals. The FDA has approved the devices for acne photodynamic therapy. Study after study is showing effectiveness with stubborn acne with photodynamic therapy. It appears to have exceptional potential for those who cannot take Accutane. Unfortunately, insurance companies are slow to set up co-pay strategies for this therapy, and as yet it remains mostly uncovered, and a treatment for only those with discretionary funds. As with most new dermatology technologies, our clinic is the first to offer this new choice.

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