

Consultant Haematologist : Dr Arun Alfred
Secretaries Janet Mayo 01709 427003 or Amber Ibbotson 01709 424592
ECP Unit : 01709 427003

Website: www.Photopheresis.co.uk

Rotherham Photopheresis website is located on the internet

Welcome to the Photopheresis (ECP) unit at Rotherham Hospital

Where are we located?

The Photopheresis Unit (ECP) is located on Whiston suite. Level C junction 1.
Rotherham ECP is open 08.15-11.30 and 12.30-16.30 Monday – Friday.

If you wish to cancel or amend your next treatment booking please call our administration team on the numbers listed (426138 and 424592)

What is Photopheresis?

Photopheresis (ECP) is a safe therapy used to treat conditions where the white blood cells are thought to be the cause of the problem. ECP Therapy is a light activated treatment of your white blood cells which takes place outside the body.

ECP treatment involves you, the patient being attached to a machine by central venous line, or by inserting a needle into a vein in your arm.

This cannula is attached to the machine tubing and then the machine draws, returns and spins your blood in a special centrifuge bowl to separate the blood cells so that we can collect the white cells and treat them.

Over a period of 40 – 90 minutes a calculated portion of your white cells are collected and then pushed into a collection bag on the machine, once enough white cells have been collected the clinical nurse specialist then injects a calculated amount of an intravenous drug called Uvadex (Methoxsalen) into the bag with your white cells in this is to make these cells sensitive to UVA light. These cells are then photo activated over a given length of time. Each treatment takes between 1-3 hours. Any bloods cells not required are returned via the machine back to you the patient while the white cells are processed.

The therapy is usually administered over two days. This can be two consecutive days or split over the week, your treatment regime will be decided upon by the haematology consultant: treatments may be weekly, fortnightly or monthly. The length of time you attend for ECP is decided by the consultant on an individual basis.

Medication

Please bring a comprehensive list of all your tablets currently being taken including any non-prescription medication

On the day of treatment please do not take the following medication:-

- Antihypertensive medication (tablets to lower your blood pressure)
- Diuretics (water Tablets)

This medication can be taken after the collection of cells.

Please contact the Photopheresis Unit on 427003 should any of the following apply:

- commencing blood thinning agents such as Warfarin or Low Molecular Weight Heparin (e.g Tinzaparin, Fragmin , Dalteparin etc)
- Medication changes

Diet

Two days prior to ECP therapy please observe a low fat diet and keep well hydrated.

Please inform the unit Photopheresis Unit on 427003 if you have been advised to take restricted fluids.

- Whilst receiving treatment certain foods may increase skin sensitivity .Foods such as Limes, Figs, Parsnips, Mustard, Carrots and Celery should be avoided if possible whilst having treatment (This is because these foods naturally contain Psoralen)

Side Effects

Photopheresis is a relatively safe treatment with very few side effects however you may experience.

- Increase in redness of your skin
- Increase in itchiness

You may feel like you are starting with a fever, shivering, feeling hot and /or aching, this is because we have disturbed your Immune System, this feeling should only last for a few hours. However, if you continue to feel unwell or are worried at all and you have returned please do not hesitate to contact your usual hospital for advice.

After-Care.

Once all your cells have been returned to you your skin and eyes will be very sensitive to sunlight or UVA light for at least 48 hours. We recommend that you use a **Total Sun Block** and **UVA treated Sun glasses these should be wrap around** if possible.

Deferral of Treatment

Sometimes treatment may need to be deferred. This may happen with any of the following circumstances / conditions.

Low Haemoglobin below 10

Haematocrit below 0.27

Temperature 38° or above

Low platelets below 20

Vomiting or Diarrhoea until a stool sample is obtained and an infection is ruled out

Recent Blood Clots (will not be able to treat for 6 weeks)

Recent Heart Attack (will not be able to treat for 6 weeks)

Shingles or Chicken Pox (cannot treat until all the lesions are dry)

Transport

If you do not have your own transport please inform our Administration team who will explain how you can book a medi-car.

NB: Due to limited space within the Photopheresis Unit we are unable to let relatives or escorts stay during treatment, although they are welcome to drop you off at our reception.