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# To the Patient: About Phototherapy

One of the treatments you will be receiving is called phototherapy; it may also be referred to as laser or light therapy. Channelling therapeutic light energy for the purpose of reducing pain has been a widely accepted medical practice for many years.



Your therapist may use phototherapy, which includes the delivery of superluminous diode (SLD) and low level laser therapy (LLLT), for temporary increase in local blood circulation, temporary relief of minor muscle and joint aches, pains, stiffness, and the relaxation of muscles, as well as for muscle spasms, and minor pain and stiffness associated with arthritis. It may also be used for the temporary relief of hand and wrist pain associated with carpal tunnel syndrome. Phototherapy is a physical treatment modality using SLD and LLLT diodes to emit photons (light) in very specific regions of the electromagnetic spectrum which penetrate the skin stimulating a cascade of clinical benefits. Radiant energy absorbed by elements in mitochondria and cell membranes is converted into biological energy, inducing processes, such as increased local microcirculation, accelerated tissue repair, reduced pain, decreased inflammation and edema, enhanced immune response, and angiogenesis.

Phototherapy can be used to treat both acute and chronic conditions, including whiplash injuries, osteoarthritis, migraine headaches, disc herniations, sprains/strains, bursitis, carpal tunnel, plantar fasciitis, and others listed in the table below. Research indicates that phototherapy can accelerate wound and tissue repair by as much as 30- 40%.

It is important to understand that phototherapy is not a cure-all. Occasionally, it may be the only therapy prescribed, but more often it is used in conjunction with other therapeutic and rehabilitative treatments. Your doctor or therapist will determine when phototherapy is indicated, how often it should be used, and the length of each application. The exact frequency of treatment depends upon the individual patient and the conditions being treated. Generally, periodic treatments are continued as long as the condition is present. Treatments may be given as often as 2-3 times per day in acute or serious conditions. In less serious cases, two to three times a week is common early in the treatment program with a gradual reduction in frequency as the patient improves. To receive maximum benefit from your phototherapy treatments, it is important to follow the recommendations and instructions of your doctor or therapist as precisely and completely as possible.

Your doctor or therapist can provide you with a list of contraindications, warnings, precautions, and possible adverse reactions.

<b>Major Conditions Treated with Phototherapy</b>			
Whiplash Injuries	Sinusitis	DeQuervain's Tenosynovitis	Ligamentous Injuries
Facet Joint Syndrome	Tendonitis	Carpal Tunnel Syndrome	Osgood Schlatter's Disease
Cervical Radiculopathy	Bursitis	Myofasciitis	Meniscus Injuries
Disc Herniations	Impingement Syndrome	Costochondritis	Post-Operative Rehab
Osteoarthritis	Rotator Cuff Syndrome	Sciatic Neuralgia	Bunions
Migraine Headache	Frozen Shoulder	Sacroiliac Joint Dysfunction	Plantar Fasciitis
Tension Headache	Epicondylitis	Stenosis	Fibromyalgia
Cervicogenic Headache	Fractures	Capsulitis	Wound Healing
TMJ Dysfunction	Rheumatoid Arthritis	Chondromalacia Patella	Torticollis