

Patient Information on Photodynamic Therapy (PDT)

You are having PDT treatment for your lung tumour. This information is to help you understand how photodynamic therapy (**PDT**) with **Photofrin** works and what side effects may occur. It will also explain what you can do before and after treatment to prevent a photosensitive reaction - a potential side effect in anyone undergoing PDT. If, after reading this guide you have further questions, discuss them with your doctor.

Injection of Photofrin is the first in a two-part treatment called photodynamic therapy (PDT). By itself, the drug is inactive. However, when it is illuminated by red light from a laser it becomes active.

When injected, the drug goes to the tissues and is retained by cancer cells. When the laser is turned on, the drug is activated and both pre-cancerous and cancerous cells are destroyed. The laser produces red light, rather than heat, and so there is no burning sensation associated with PDT treatment.

Before Treatment

Photodynamic therapy with Photofrin is a treatment for certain types of lung cancer. It uses a combination of a photosensitive drug (a drug that is activated by light) and light from a non-thermal laser. **After administration of Photofrin, your skin and eyes will be very sensitive to direct sunlight and bright lights for at least 30 days. Some patients may stay photosensitive for up to 90 days or more. This means that if you get too much light, your skin is at risk of becoming red and inflamed, similar to severe sunburn.**

Before you leave home:

Be sure the windows in your home have curtains or shades to block out direct sunlight. Avoid direct sunlight from skylights.

Bring or wear to the hospital:

- **Dark sunglasses** (Light transmittance of less than 4%)
- **Gloves**
- **Wide-brimmed hat**
- **Long-sleeved shirt**
- **Trousers**
- **Socks with shoes or sandals.**

During Treatment

You will be given an injection of the photosensitizing drug Photofrin. 40 to 50 hours after the injection, light from a laser will activate the drug in pre-cancerous and cancerous cells, and this will destroy them. The type of laser used does not involve heat. Your doctor will direct the laser light through a fiberoptic endoscope, during the bronchoscopy. This treatment can take up to an hour. You may be given a sedative and/or a local or general anesthetic, so you should feel little or no discomfort. Often patients are awake during the procedure.