Guidelines for topical PUVA: a report of a workshop of the British Photodermatology Group

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Summary

Psoralen photochemotherapy [psoralen ultraviolet A (PUVA)] plays an important part in dermatological therapeutics, being an effective and generally safe treatment for psoriasis and other dermatoses. In order to maintain optimal efficacy and safety, guidelines concerning best practice should be available to operators and supervisors. The British Photochemotherapy Group (BPG) have previously published recommendations on PUVA, including UVA dosimetry and calibration, patient pretreatment assessment, indications and contraindications, and the management of adverse reactions. While most current knowledge relates to oral PUVA, the use of topical PUVA regimens is also popular and presents a number of questions peculiar to this modality, including the choice of psoralen, formulation, method of application, optimal timing of treatment, UVA regimens and relative benefits or risks as compared with oral PUVA. Bath PUVA, i.e. generalized immersion, is the most frequently used modality of topical treatment, practiced by about 100 centers in the U.K., while other topical preparations tend to be used for localized diseases such as those affecting the hands and feet. This paper is the product of a recent workshop of the BPG and includes guidelines for bath, local immersion and other topical PUVA. These recommendations are based, where possible, on the results of controlled studies, or otherwise on the consensus view on current practice.

Appendix

1. Psoralen formulations,
2. Protocol for bath (generalized immersion) PUVA,
3. Protocol for hand and foot immersion PUVA,
4. Protocol for other topical 8-methoxypsoralen PUVA.

Key words: photochemotherapy, psoralens, PUVA, therapy