

## PHOTOCHEMOTHERAPY FOR PSORIASIS

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PUVA was used on thirty five psoriatic patients. Early and complete clearance of lesions was seen in all but two patients, between 5 to 35 days of treatment. There were no serious side effects.

**Key words :** Psoriasis, Photochemotherapy.

This study was undertaken to evaluate the effects of photochemotherapy on psoriasis, seen by us.

### Materials and Methods

Thirty five patients belonging to the army service were included in this study. Out of them, there were 15 old cases having recurring episodes with varying results of other anti-psoriatic regimes tried on them. The remaining were fresh cases without any kind of treatment used by them till they came to us. All patients were army personnel between 22 years to 45 years of age. There was no case of erythroderma. Psoralen 20-40 mg was administered to each patient daily at 8 a.m. followed by exposure to 290 nm to 320 nm U V light at 10 a.m. Engel hard Hanovia lamps slough were used as the radiation source. The lesion was kept 12 cm away from the lamp. Skin test with erythema dose was carried out on a preceding day. The duration of exposure was increased on subsequent days starting from one minute, the maximum exposure being 10 minutes.

### Results

Average duration required for complete clearance of the lesions in 33 patients was 15 days. Two patients did not have any improvement even after 60 days of this treatment. Regression of the lesions started after 5 days and the maximum period required to clear the lesions in any patient was 35 days (Table I). Mild gastric irritation was observed in three patients. The

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Table I. Results of photochemotherapy.

Number of days for complete clearance of lesions	Number of patients
5-10	5(14%)
11-20	18(15%)
21-30	7(20%)
31-35	3( 8%)

patients who were cured completely were followed up for one year, except 5 cases who were posted out of station. Only one of the remaining 28 patients got the recurrence of the disease during the subsequent winter, while the remaining were asymptomatic.

### Comments

Photochemotherapy is a well established method.<sup>1-5</sup> In India, several studies have been reported.<sup>6-9</sup> In our patients, the maximum response was seen during the 2nd and the 3rd week of therapy. Five patients responded within 5-10 days which is quite encouraging, while 3 cases needed treatment upto 31-35 days. An interesting observation was that old cases of psoriasis with background of many recurring exacerbations, gave better response than the fresh cases.

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