

PHOTOTHERAPY, PHOTODYNAMIC THERAPY

## AN INTERVIEW-BASED STUDY TO EVALUATE SAFETY AND EFFICACY OF HOME BASED NARROW BAND UVB (NB-UVB) PHOTOTHERAPY FOR PATIENTS OF VITILIGO VULGARIS

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**Background:** Narrow Band UVB (NB-UVB) phototherapy is currently considered a gold standard in medical treatment for vitiligo. However, access to institute-based phototherapy chambers in India is difficult due to its vast geographic distribution. As an alternative, home-based phototherapy may be a good option. Further, home-based NB-UVB treatment can ensure regular treatment sessions which may enhance the likelihood of re-pigmentation as opposed to irregular institute visits.

**Objective:** In this study, we try to ascertain the safety and efficacy of home-based NB-UVB phototherapy devices and their ease of use.

**Materials and Methods:** A questionnaire based telephonic interview was conducted for each patient. A total 86 patients were prescribed NB-UVB home devices (between 2014-2018), only those patients (40) who were accessible and consented were included in the study. The prescribed frequency of treatment was twice or thrice a week and the overall duration of treatment ranged from 1 - 36 months. Patients with localized and limited vitiligo lesions were given handheld devices (Single Philips UVB Narrowband PL-S 9W/01) while patients with extensive vitiligo were given home units (panel with four 2ft tubes of Philips UVB Narrowband TL 20W/01).

**Results:** On retrospective analysis of data, 87.5% of the patients were using the home devices, with 75% taking the treatment regularly. 60% of the patients found it helpful and would recommend it as a treatment modality for vitiligo. An average of 67% re-pigmentation was seen in those who responded to treatment. 2 patients reported minor side effects like redness and a burning sensation. 95% patients experienced no side effects.

**Conclusions:** Home based NB -UVB is a safe and efficacious method for treating vitiligo in those patients who cannot access a phototherapy chamber in an institutional set-up.