PHOTOTHERAPY, PHOTODYNAMIC THERAPY

SIDE EFFECTS AND RISKS OF PHOTOTHERAPY

John Koo [1]

University of California San Francisco, Dermatology, San Francisco, United States Of America [1]

Both UVB and PUVA phototherapy have been famous for their safety, which has been proven over many decades worldwide. With regard to narrowband or broadband UVB, many studies that were conducted and published show no evidence for increased risk of skin cancer of any type in any ethnic group. The only exceptions involve studies that were not purely UVB, but in fact mixed in with PUVA patients and one study in which numerical values for skin cancer incidence was increased, but not statistically significant. With regard to PUVA phototherapy, to date, whether PUVA increases increases melanoma risk or not remains controversial. It is well-accepted that PUVA increases risk of squamous cell skin cancer but this has only been demonstrated in fair-skinned Caucasian patients. Worldwide testing of PUVA in non-Caucasian populations did not show increased risk of any skin cancer. With regard to topical PUVA, all the studies show no increase in skin cancer risk so far. The controversy with regard to the available data on melanoma for systemic PUVA in Caucasian population will be discussed in detail.