

# EXCIMER LIGHT THERAPY



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## Which conditions are suitable for Excimer Light Therapy?

Excimer Light Therapy is best suited for the treatment of smaller areas affected by:

- Vitiligo
- Psoriasis
- Alopecia areata
- Lichen planus
- Eczema
- Mycosis fungoides
- Granuloma annulare

## What is Excimer Light Therapy and how does it work?

Excimer Light is a type of UVB light therapy delivered at a specific wavelength of 308nm. The light therapy works in two ways to bring about relief of symptoms:

1. Excimer light stimulates the migration of melanocytes from the hair follicles to the epidermis to re-pigment areas affected by vitiligo.
2. Death of pro-inflammatory cells called T-cells reduces itching, inflammation and plaque formation in psoriasis and other inflammatory skin conditions.

## What are the advantages of Excimer Light Therapy?

- Quick and painless procedure with no down time.
- Delivers UVB to the affected areas only, preserves adjacent healthy skin, reducing the risk of aging and cancer.
- Can be used in difficult to reach areas inaccessible by larger devices.
- Safe to use in children, pregnancy and nursing mothers.
- There is no thinning of the skin, easy bruising, or stretch marks often caused by steroids, nor any of the systemic side effects caused by some oral medications.

## How quickly will I see results?

Results depend on the extent, thickness and the locations of the affected skin. Psoriasis patients will begin to notice improvement within 4 to 6 treatments. Significant improvement is often seen in 6 to 10 treatments for psoriasis and after 20 treatments for vitiligo. Vitiligo lesions on the face show the best results. Hands, feet and fingers are more difficult to treat.

## How many sessions will I require?

Treatments are recommended once a week.  
Vitiligo - Average 20 treatments  
Psoriasis - Average 10 treatments  
Individual results will vary and a repeat course of therapy may be recommended for relapse after remission.

## What will happen during the treatment session?

Excimer light treatments are performed by a therapist in the dermatologist's office. Your doctor will determine your dose of light based on your condition and skin colour. You will be given dark goggles to protect your eyes. Your skin will be cleaned and make-up removed. The therapist aims a hand held device directly at the patches of skin to be treated. You might feel some warmth at the site.

## Is there any pain associated with the Excimer Light Therapy?

No. The treatment is pain free and anesthesia is not required.

## How long does the treatment take?

Treatments are relatively quick. The exact time depends on how many areas are being treated. Typically, patients can be in and out of the treatment room in ten to twenty minutes.

## What are the risks and complications of Excimer Light Therapy?

The side effects of Excimer light therapy are minimal. You may experience a mild and short-lived redness at the lesion site and

darkening or lightening of the skin (hyperpigmentation or hypopigmentation). Other rare reported side effects after treatment include:

- Itching, burning, and stinging
- Blistering
- Purple-coloured spots (purpura) on the skin
- Scarring

More research is needed to determine whether exposure to UVB light from the excimer light might increase the long-term risk for skin cancer.

## How do I care for my skin after the procedure?

There are no specific skin care instructions post procedure. You may use your usual topical creams and camouflage immediately afterwards.

## How much does Excimer Light Therapy cost?

The cost depends on the number of areas treated and ranges from R300 to R1000 for a single session.

## Is Excimer Light Therapy covered by medical aid societies?

Yes. Payment is by cash or card on the day of the therapy. You will be provided with an invoice with tariff codes which you may use to claim from your medical aid. The amount refunded will depend on your medical aid and plan. Kindly enquire with your medical aid for this information.

## Who should avoid Excimer Light Therapy?

Avoid laser treatments if you have:

- Lupus or scleroderma
- Sun sensitivity
- Xeroderma Pigmentosum (an inherited disease that causes sensitivity to sunlight)
- Risks for, or a history of, skin cancer
- A condition that requires you to take medication that makes you sensitive to the sun



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