Photodynamic Therapy (PDT)
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Photodynamic therapy may be helpful for an eye condition called wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD). This condition affects your central vision when new abnormal blood vessels grow under your retina. The retina is the delicate lining in the back of your eye. Your retina turns light into images.
The first step in treatment is an intravenous (IV) infusion of a dye that is activated by a special light. The infusion will take 10 minutes. The light is administered by non-heat (non-thermal) laser therapy which seals the abnormal blood vessels in the back of your eye.

Although your vision may not get better after this treatment, it may prevent further vision loss. You may need more than one treatment. Treatments are given 2-3 months apart.

On the day of your treatment, staff in the Eye Care Centre will give you a prescription for Visudyne®. Take the prescription to the hospital drugstore on the main floor. This medication costs about $2,000 (September 2016). Pharmacare or third party insurance may cover the cost. If the cost is not covered by insurance, please be ready to pay when you pick up the medication at the drugstore.
Getting ready for the treatment

- You will need to have a recent IVF (dye) test before each treatment. This may be done on the day you have your PDT or a day or so before. If you live out of town, you may need to arrange to stay in Halifax overnight. Your eye doctor’s office can answer any questions about this.

- If you are flying home after your treatment, make sure you give yourself plenty of time. There may be delays at the Eye Care Centre. For example, do not schedule an early afternoon flight home if your treatment is in the morning.

- Plan to be at the Eye Care Centre for about 2-3 hours.

- On the day of your treatment, bring clothing with you that will cover your arms, legs, head and neck. We suggest that you wear pants with long legs, a long-sleeved top, gloves and a wide brimmed hat. You will be given dark sunglasses to wear on the day of your treatment. None of your skin should be exposed.
• Elective surgery or dental work cannot be done within 48 hours after your treatment. You will need to cancel these procedures and rebook for a later time.

• If you wear contact lenses, you may be asked not to wear them on the day of your treatment.

• Eat your meals as usual before coming to the Centre, or bring a snack.

• Register at the Reception Desk in the Eye Care Centre, 2nd floor, Centennial Building, Victoria General site.

• It may not be possible to have PDT if you have certain allergies or liver disease. A nurse will review your health history with you before the treatment. The doctor then decides if it is OK for you to have the treatment.

• Your height and weight will be taken.

• A nurse will dilate your pupils with eye drops. You may need to have drops 1-3 times.
How is the treatment done?

• The doctor will ask you to sign a consent form.

• You will have an intravenous (IV) needle placed into a vein in your arm. The medication will run into your vein over a 10-minute period.

• Freezing drops will be placed in your eye to prevent discomfort from the special contact lens used. The lens will hold your lids apart and allow the doctor to see the area being treated.

• You will see a light during laser treatment. Laser treatment is almost always painless, although some patients may have slight discomfort. Be sure to tell the doctor or nurse if you are uncomfortable.

• The laser treatment will take just over 1 minute.

If you have any questions, please ask.

We are here to help you.
After the treatment

• Do not expose your eyes or skin to bright light for at least 2 days after the treatment. This includes, but is not limited to, bright sunlight, halogen lighting in houses and offices, and the lighting used in a dentist’s office, operating room, or tanning salon.

• Do not stay in the dark. It is good to expose your skin to indoor light. **This helps to clear the medication from your body.**

• You must wear the dark sunglasses you were given in the Centre for the next 2 days if you have to go outside. Cover all parts of your skin with clothing when outdoors for 2 days.

• **Using sunscreen will not protect you from getting a very bad sunburn.**

• Your nurse will put an “alert bracelet” on your wrist before you leave the Centre. This will tell any healthcare worker that you are very sensitive to sunlight and halogen lighting.
• Within 12-24 hours after treatment, your vision may decrease for a little while. This usually resolves within 2-3 days.

• If you have any problems after the treatment, call your eye doctor’s office at the phone number on your alert bracelet.

• Do not drive for at least 48 hours (2 days) after the treatment because your vision may be blurred. Ask your eye doctor when you can drive.

• Your eye doctor’s office will contact you to arrange your follow-up visit, which will be within 3-4 months.

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Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.