

Photodynamic Therapy (PDT)

Register using a self check-in kiosk in the main entrance of the Centennial or the Dickson Building, Victoria General site.

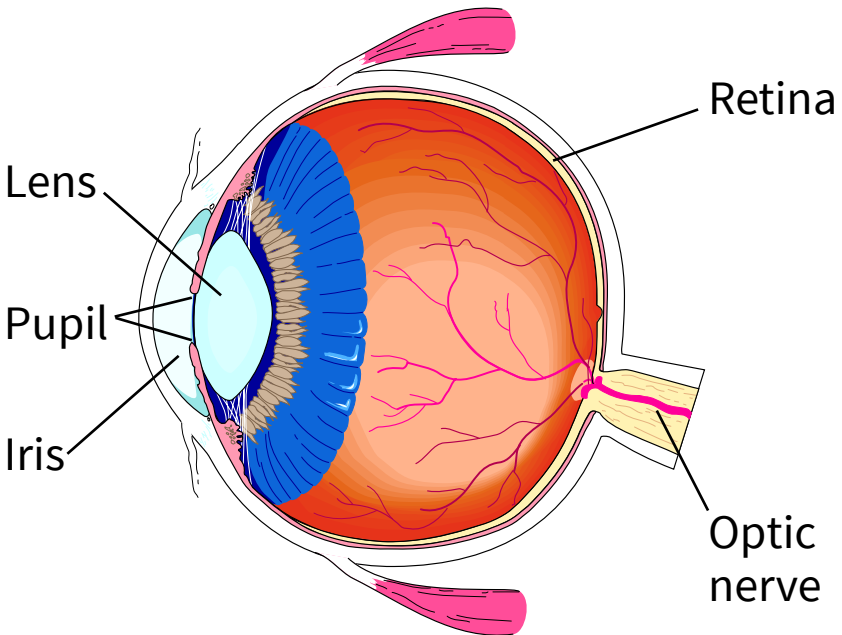
Next, go to the Eye Care Centre in the Centennial Building, 2A.

Photodynamic Therapy (PDT)

Photodynamic therapy is a treatment that may help eye conditions like:

- **Wet Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD):** Wet AMD affects your central vision when new, abnormal blood vessels grow under your retina.
- **Central Serous Retinopathy (CSR):** CSR is a buildup of fluid under your retina.

The retina covers the back inside wall of the eye. When light hits the retina, an image is formed. Messages about this image are sent to the brain and vision (being able to see) takes place.



How does PDT work?

- The first step in PDT treatment is an intravenous (IV) infusion of medication. This medication is activated by a special light. The light is given by a non-thermal (non-heat) laser. The light causes the medication to seal the abnormal blood vessels in the back of your eye. The infusion will take 10 minutes.
- You may need more than one treatment. Treatments may be done 2 to 3 months apart, if needed.
- Although your vision may not get better after PDT, it may prevent further vision loss.
- On the day of your treatment, the retina specialist (doctor that treats retina diseases) will give you a prescription for Visudyne®. This medication costs about \$2,000. Pharmacare or your private insurance may cover the cost. Take the prescription to the drugstore on the main floor of the Victoria General Building.
If the cost is not covered by your insurance, you will have to pay when you pick up the medication.

Getting ready for treatment

- 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 your treatment. The retina specialist will then decide if it is OK for you to have PDT.
- Pictures of your retina will be taken before your treatment. The retina specialist uses these pictures to find out where to apply the laser.
- The pictures are usually taken during a fluorescein angiogram (FA) or an indocyanine green (ICG) test.
 - › This may be done on the day you have your PDT, or a day or so before. If you live outside of Halifax, you may need to stay in Halifax overnight. The Eye Care Centre can answer any questions about this.
- Plan to be at the Eye Care Centre for about 2 to 3 hours.

- 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, if your treatment is in the morning, **do not** schedule an early afternoon flight.
- **On the day of your treatment, none of your skin should be exposed.** Wear clothing that covers your arms, legs, head, and neck (like ankle-length pants, a long-sleeved top, gloves, and a wide-brimmed hat). **Bring dark sunglasses to wear.**
- **Do not wear contact lenses on the day of your treatment.**

Day of treatment

- Eat your meals as usual. You can bring a snack if you like.
- Register using a self check-in kiosk in the main entrance of the Centennial or Dickson Building, Victoria General site. Next, go to the Eye Care Centre in the Centennial Building, 2A and check in at the reception desk.
- Staff will measure your height and weight.
- You will be asked to review and sign a consent form.

How is the treatment done?

- A nurse will use eye drops to dilate (make bigger) your pupils.
- A nurse will place an IV in your arm. You will be given medication through the IV for 10 minutes.

- Freezing drops will be placed in your eye to prevent discomfort from the special contact lens used. The lens will hold your eyelids apart to let the retina specialist see the area being treated.
- You will see a light during the laser treatment. Laser treatment is almost always painless, but you may have slight discomfort. Be sure to tell the retina specialist if you have discomfort.
- The laser treatment will take just over 1 minute.

After the treatment

12 to 24 hours after the treatment, your vision may get worse for a little while. This usually gets better in 2 to 3 days.

For the first 48 hours (2 days) after your treatment:

- **Do not expose your eyes or skin to bright light.** This includes bright sunlight, halogen lighting in houses and offices, lighting used in dental offices, operating rooms, and tanning salons, etc.
- **Using sunscreen will NOT protect you from getting a very bad sunburn.** Cover all parts of your skin with clothing when outdoors.
- **You must wear sunglasses when outdoors.**
- **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 will be given an “alert bracelet” to wear on your wrist. This will tell any health care worker that you are very sensitive to sunlight and halogen lighting. You can take the bracelet off after 48 hours.

- **Do not drive.** Your vision may be blurred. Ask your retina specialist when you can drive.
 - › **You must have someone come with you to the Clinic for the test and to drive you home on the day of treatment.**
- **Do not** have elective (not urgent) surgery or dental work.

If you have any problems, call your retina specialist's office at the phone number on your alert bracelet.

Your retina specialist's office will contact you in 3 to 4 months to arrange a follow-up visit.

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

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