

Advice before attending your laser appointment

Information for patients and carers

This leaflet provides essential information for patients undergoing laser treatment for various skin conditions.

What is laser treatment?

Laser treatment uses focused light to treat various skin conditions. The laser can target specific areas without damaging the surrounding tissue. It is commonly used for:

- Improving the appearance of birthmarks or pigmented lesions
- Treating acne scars
- Resurfacing the skin
- Removing tattoos.

There are 3 different lasers used within St John's Laser Department. Pulsed Dye Laser, ND:YAG Laser and Carbon Dioxide Laser. Each laser treats different conditions. The laser Consultant will on the day decide which laser is most appropriate for your skin condition.

Preparing for your laser sessions

Before any laser treatment you must:

- Minimise sun exposure and use SPF 50 Sunscreen. You must not be going on holiday abroad 4 weeks before and after treatment.
- You may need to stop using photosensitive medications and certain topical treatments (e.g., retinoids) before the procedure. Please check with your GP to see if you are taking any photosensitive medications.
- Avoid other skin treatments, such as waxing, plucking, chemical peels, and other laser treatments for at least 2 weeks before your laser session.
- Avoid tanning - Do not use sun beds or self-tanning products for 4 weeks before your treatment and whilst you are receiving laser treatment.

On the day of treatment

When attending the department please arrive **15 minutes before your appointment time** to attend our Medical Photography department for Clinical photographs to be taken. You will then be assessed by a Laser Consultant on the suitability of Laser Treatment and your medical history.

Before a full treatment is carried out, we will perform a test on a small area of skin. We do this to find out how your skin responds to the laser so we can set it to the correct setting and check there are no adverse effects for you before we start the treatment.

Please ensure that the area(s) of skin to be treated is clean and free of lotions, makeup, deodorant, or any other products.

During the procedure

Protective Eyewear: You will be given protective eyewear to shield your eyes from the laser, there are usually adhesive eye patches worn during the procedure.

Sensation: You may feel a snapping sensation or mild discomfort during the procedure. Aloe Vera gel is applied after the procedure to help cool down the skin.

The length of the procedure varies depending on the size and number of areas being treated.

It can also depend on whether you require any anaesthetic injections for the procedure to be done.

In some cases treatment is not carried out on the day and you are placed on a waiting list to have some procedures carried out. Laser can often be a course of treatment and can result in multiple visits, that are usually about 8-12 weeks apart.

Contact information

Please contact the Laser department on 01506 523527 should you have any questions that are not answered within this leaflet.