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Phototherapy of Psoriasis, a Chronic Inflammatory Skin Disease

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Abstract

Phototherapy is an effective treatment modality for several skin diseases which has been in use from the era of the Egyptians. Insight into its mode of action has gradually accumulated over the past decades. A crucial biological effect of ultraviolet radiation is the induction of apoptosis in T lymphocytes and in keratinocytes in the epidermis. Via this mechanism inflammation-induced pathological changes characteristic of psoriasis are counteracted.

Phototherapy remains the only therapeutic option for certain patient groups where modification of the systemic immune reactions is contraindicated, such as by HIV, internal malignancy or pregnancy. UVB treatment is highly cost-effective, which is important in this age of increasing health care costs.

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