

Extracorporeal Photopheresis

Utah Blood and Marrow Transplant Program

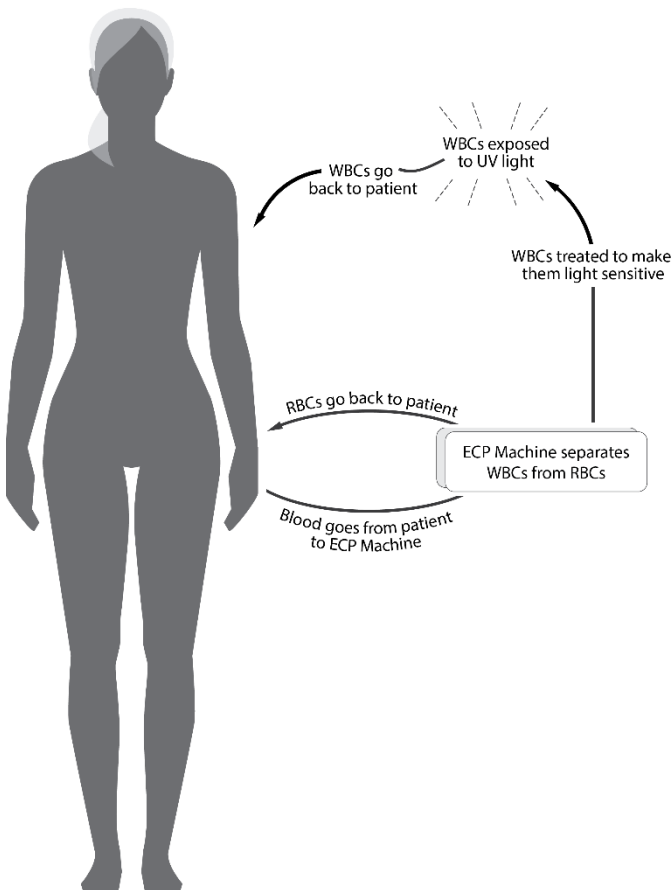
Extracorporeal photopheresis (ECP) is used to treat T-cell lymphoma, graft-versus-host disease, and some other conditions.

ECP is the standard treatment for GVHD that has not gotten better with steroids.

What is ECP

During ECP treatment a machine collects a small amount of your white blood cells. We use a special medicine treated with UV light to kill the diseased cells. We then return the blood to your bloodstream.

It is difficult to fully understand the exact mechanism of how ECP treats GHVD. Some research is finding a change in the blood after ECP that helps decrease swelling and inflammation.



What to expect during ECP treatment?

Intravenous (IV) access allows us to collect your blood and give it back to you after treatment. If you have small or scarred veins you may need a central line (central venous catheter). A central line is a long, thin tube that's put into the large vein in your chest. It either comes out through your skin or ends in a port just under your skin. It's used to give medicines, fluid and blood.

Your medical team will check your vital signs and blood counts before the treatment starts. You must have enough platelets and red blood cells to get ECP treatment. If your platelet or red blood cell count is low, you may need blood transfusions to increase your blood counts.

These tests make sure it is safe for you to have the treatment. If it is not safe, the team may reschedule your treatment.

ECP can take 1 to 4 hours to complete. Most people need treatment for 2 to 3 days every week or month.

You will be lying down or reclining during ECP. Bring a book or electronic device with headphones for music or entertainment.

Most people don't have any side effects during ECP. Some side effects include:

- minor discomfort when the IV line is inserted
- slight pulsing from the machine pump
- mild dizziness
- nausea
- tingling
- slight chills
- cramping or a cool feeling where the blood re-enters the body

Some people have fatigue, skin flushing or low-grade fevers for 1 to 2 days afterwards.

Please arrive on time for your ECP treatment. If you are late, we must reschedule your treatment. If you must cancel your appointment, please call 801-587-4477 to reschedule.