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Melasma treated with intense pulsed light.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Hypermelanosis includes a diverse group of genetic and acquired skin anomalies that appear as darker, hyperpigmented areas. **Melasma**, in particular, is a hypermelanotic condition that affects sun-exposed skin in females. Whether this condition is acquired or genetic is still controversial. However, it clearly correlates with exposure to UV **light**, a genetic predisposition, and hormonal variations (from pregnancy or oral contraceptives).

METHODS: Between October 2006 and March 2008, 38 patients with **melasma** were treated with **intense pulsed light** (IPL) at the LASER Center of the Department of Health Science, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Session, University of L'Aquila. Diagnosis was based on medical history, physical examination, and video microscopy.

RESULTS: Results were graded as excellent, good, moderate, or poor. Grades were given according to outcome scale and reported complications. All 38 patients had follow-up checks at 30 days, 3 months, and 6 months and someone at more than 1 year. Results were excellent in 18 patients (47.37%), good in 11 (28.95%), moderate in 5 (13.16%), and poor in 4 cases (10.52%).

CONCLUSION: From a careful review of the scientific literature and according to our personal clinical experience, IPL stands out as an **effective** tool in the **treatment** and healing of a high percentage of hypermelanosis and **melasma**, with a very low risk of complications and an excellent satisfaction rate among patients.

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