Role of laser therapy in pediatric patients.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Laser applications have revolutionized the treatment of many cutaneous vascular anomalies. Because most of these lesions are congenital, the pediatric population has benefited primarily. In this article, the authors focus primarily on laser treatment options, realizing that this modality is but one part of an overall comprehensive plan of management options for these affected children.

METHODS: The literature was reviewed and interjected into the authors' 20 years of experience in the use of lasers in the pediatric population.

RESULTS: The use of different therapy modalities, such as the neodymium:yttrium-aluminum-garnet laser, pulsed dye laser, erbium:yttrium-aluminum-garnet laser, and intense pulsed light systems, is discussed. Outcomes, risks, benefits, and treatment protocols vary for each entity and for each laser. The authors' results and those of others are presented.

CONCLUSIONS: Lasers play a vital role as an adjunctive therapy or definitive therapy in many of the authors' pediatric patients. Anyone treating such patients should be well aware of lasers as a valuable tool.