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## A clinical comparison and long-term follow-up of topical 5-fluorouracil versus laser resurfacing in the treatment of widespread actinic keratoses.

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### Abstract

**BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES:** Many **treatment** modalities exist for **actinic** keratoses (AK). Topical 5-fluorouracil (5-FU) has been one of the standard treatments. **Laser** resurfacing is a more recent **treatment** option. In the literature prospective randomized studies comparing these treatments are lacking.

**STUDY DESIGN/PATIENTS AND METHODS:** Prospective randomized study to compare topical 5-FU with Er:YAG **laser** resurfacing. Fifty-five patients with multiple AK on the scalp and or the face were included. Clinical and histopathological evaluation took place at 3, 6, and 12 months after **treatment**.

**RESULTS:** At 3, 6, and 12 months after **treatment**, there were significantly less recurrences in the **laser** group compared to the group of patients treated with 5-FU. Side effects did occur more frequently in the **laser** group, especially erythema and hypopigmentation.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Compared to **treatment** with topical 5-FU, Er:YAG **laser** resurfacing is more effective regarding recurrence rates. Although significantly more side effects occur, **laser** resurfacing is a useful therapeutic option especially in patients with widespread AK.

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