

FAQ's – Melasma Treatment with LightPod Neo

Contraindications:

Patients that should not be treated include:

- those who are sunburned or have irritated skin in the sites to be treated*
- those who are exhibiting unidentified skin conditions in the sites to be treated*
- those who have healed poorly after other types of laser treatments*
- patients prone to skin discoloration*
- patients who are taking photosensitizing medication, such as Accutane, should discontinue the medication 6 months before treatment*
- patients who are taking topical Retin-A, patients should wait 2 weeks before treatment*
- don't apply laser energy to any raised lesions, aside from purely red ones i.e. angiomas; other lesions should first be checked by a dermatologist*

Patients who are sunburned should wait until the burn subsides. Herpes Simplex Labialis (fever blisters) can be activated by laser treatment, especially on the upper lip, and patients with a tendency for fever blistering can be started on antiviral medication before treatment.

Setting expectations:

Some patients may not respond as well as others. Melasma lesions tend to darken after the first or subsequent treatments. Key factors in terms of treatment response are whether there is a sufficient melanin in the affected area, the depth of the lesion, and other factors. Regardless of the treatment response, recurrence is common and can be caused by factors such as sun exposure, genetic disposition and hormones. It is important to understand that melasma, like eczema and psoriasis, is a chronic condition that can be controlled rather than cured.

How many treatment sessions are required?

This can vary depending on the size density of melanin and depth of the affected area. Typically melasma will lighten or disappear completely after 1-2 treatments although in some cases more treatments may be necessary.

Do I need to use topical anesthesia? What about gels?

No. Anesthetics and cooling gels are not needed with LightPod Neo, because MicroPulse-1064 makes it uniquely pain-free. However, some buildup of heat will be experienced, especially using higher fluences with the 2mm lens.

Is it painful?

There is a mild sensation of heat that is very tolerable. A slight pinching feeling may occur when using higher fluences with the 2mm lens. This is one of the key technical breakthroughs of Aerolase technology! The LightPod Neo has set a new standard for virtually pain-free treatment, even on darker skin types, thanks to MicroPulse-1064 technology. This unique benefit saves time, cost and mess by eliminating gels and sprays required by other lasers that cool the skin during treatment. Also, this can increase revenues through a higher rate of client retention – with other lasers and IPL devices, clients often abandon treatment after just one or two treatments due to intolerable pain.

What causes melasma?

Melasma is a very common patchy brown, tan, or blue-gray facial skin discoloration, primarily seen on the upper cheeks, lip, forehead and chin of women 20-50 years of age. Uncontrolled sunlight exposure is considered the leading cause of melasma, especially in individuals with a genetic predisposition to this condition. Melasma is most common among pregnant women, called Chloasma, especially those of Latin and Asian descents. People with olive or darker skin, such as Hispanic, Asian, and Middle Eastern individuals, have higher incidences of melasma.

Is it permanent, or will melasma come back?

Melasma is typically characterized by having up and down periods where the symptoms heighten and lessen. While the laser light can help lighten or completely rid of the pigmentation factors such as sun exposure, hormones and your genetic disposition can play a role in a reoccurrence of the symptoms.

Is it ok to do multiple passes or pulse over the same area?

Certain spots will react differently to the laser light. A good reaction is the area darkening almost immediately after the laser is pulsed on the treatment area. Since each patient will react differently it is recommended to only use one pass when using higher fluences and the 2mm spot size.

What's the spot size for treating melasma?

The Neo typically utilizes a combination of lower and higher fluences with the 6mm and 2mm lenses. Typically, more power is needed for lighter spots, while lower fluence is required to get rid of darker spots. The handpiece does not need to touch the skin, but when treating one spot at a time it may be rested on top of the skin as to stabilize the handpiece, but the legs should never be pushed into the skin.

Can it be used on dark skin?

Actually, the LightPod Neo is the safest laser in the industry for darker skin types or tanned skin. This is because of MicroPulse-1064 technology, which essentially eliminates treatment pain while minimizing the chances of hyper and/ or hypo-pigmentation. Patients with skin types IV-VI should be treated very cautiously, especially in the facial region, as they pose a higher risk of having hyper and/or hypo-pigmentations.

Can it be used on raised pigmented spots?

A dermatologist should first check raised pigmented spots before starting any kind of treatment. If the dermatologist clears the patient for treatment you may proceed with administering treatments.

What happens after treatment?

Typically, melasma will slowly lighten over the course of the next few days to weeks as the pigmented area is slowly absorbed into the skin by your body's natural healing process. In some cases, the pigment will darken before becoming lighter. In the event that any crusting or scabbing occurs, it is important to always keep the area moist as to reduce the risk of scarring.