

CLINICAL BULLETIN

No. **6**



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GentleLASE[®] Treatment of Hyperpigmentation

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Introduction

Melasma or hyperpigmentation associated with poikiloderma of Civatte are frequently observed in skin-types I, II, and III patients. Both of these conditions have been difficult to treat in the past and are sometimes highly resistant to treatment. These areas of hyperpigmentation are caused by sun exposure, hormonal influences, and genetics. Candela's GentleLASE has become an extremely useful tool in the treatment of hyperpigmentation.

Method

I have treated numerous patients with skin types I to III for hyperpigmentation of the face and neck. In the vast majority of patients, this hyperpigmentation has been caused by melasma or poikiloderma of Civatte.

The treatment protocol and parameters are very similar from one patient to the next. I typically use a 12 mm spot at a fluence of 35 to 40. The Dynamic Cooling Device™ (DCD)™ parameters are set at 50 to 60. In patients with significant hyperpigmentation, I will sometimes start at a fluence of 30. As the pigmentation clears, we are able to go up on the fluence. Patients are treated at monthly intervals a total of four treatments. Prior to laser treatment, Ela-Max 4% cream is applied to the face. This application is performed one hour prior to the procedure then

15 minutes up until the time of the procedure. No other topical creams are used during the treatment except sunscreen containing either zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. Patients are cautioned to avoid sun exposure. At monthly intervals, a total of four treatments is usually performed. Clear sun avoidance is recommended for a minimum of one month afterwards but patients are told that it is always a good idea to continue to use a good sunscreen and avoid sun when possible.

Results

Obvious improvement typically occurs from one treatment session to the next and after the final treatment before and after photographs are compared.

The improvement in patients treated for hyperpigmentation has been obvious and thrilling to the patient (see Figures 1 and 2). The main side effect was temporary bruising which lasted for as long as three to four days and mild erythema which generally dissipates within 24 hours.

Discussion

Developments in laser technology have enabled tremendous results in the treatment of hyperpigmentation. The results obtained with Candela's GentleLASE are far safer and superior than ablative methods,



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such as CO₂ resurfacing, deep acid peels, and liquid nitrogen.

The relative lack of patient discomfort, no downtime, and high patient satisfaction make this an outstanding way to treat hyperpigmentation from melasma or poikiloderma of Civatte.



Figure 1—Pre-treatment



Figure 2—Post-treatment

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