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, hypopigmented 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 some even 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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