

# ASIA-PACIFIC DERMATOLOGY AND COSMETOLOGY CONFERENCE

AUGUST 16-17, 2018 TOKYO, JAPAN

## The role of topical agents, chemical peelings, mesotherapy and laser and light devices in treatment of melisma

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**Introduction:** Melasma is an acquired, chronic, recurrent hyper pigmentary disorder. It usually affects the chronically photo-exposed cutaneous areas, especially the face and neck. It can affect patients of both sexes and of all races and ages. The disease is most commonly described in women of reproductive age. To achieve the most effective and suitable treatment or procedure for the patients with melasma, determination of the severity of melasma is important. Additionally, studies suggest that the melanin pigments and blood vessels should be targeted for obtaining the effective treatment of melasma. Different therapeutic modalities inhibit the melanin production or dispersion at variable stages through a variety of mechanisms.

**Objective:** To determine the validity of different modalities in treating melasma in patients with lighter and darker skin phototypes.

**Methodology:** We examined and treated 56 patients using various modalities for melasma treatment: 24 with topical agents, 10 with chemical peels, 9 with mesotherapy, 3 with laser devices and 10 with sun protection alone.

**Results:** We found that darker-skinned patients respond better to topical agents and sun protection, while chemical peelings and usage of laser devices can cause worsening or rebound of hyperpigmentation. Lighter-skinned individuals respond well to all treatment modalities, with topical therapies remaining the gold standard in management.

**Conclusion:** Melasma is often difficult to treat and the condition may be refractory. Principles of therapy include protection from ultraviolet light, inhibition of melanocyte activity and melanin synthesis and the disruption and removal of melanin granules. Due to the multiple treatment modalities available, the choice of treatment must consider the type of melasma, the skin complexity of the patient, previous treatments, patient expectations, as well as compliance.

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