

PATIENT INFORMATION: PIGMENTED LESION

Pigmented lesions are tan, blue grey or brown skin marks caused by a deposit of pigmented cells at various depths under the skin surface. Typical examples include sun spots, liver spots, and birth marks. At Eccles Clinic, your consultant offers treatment of these areas which can result in a more even skin tone and, in some cases, a more youthful appearance.

Q: How does laser therapy work?

A: Laser treatment involves the passage of an a gentle beam of light through the skin which targets melanin – in the form of age spots, birthmarks etc. – in the skin without causing significant damage to surrounding tissue. This causes a lightening in colour of the area being treated.

Q: What does laser treatment feel like?

A: You may experience mild discomfort from the laser exposure – which has been described as a sensation of being snapped by a rubber band. An anaesthetic cream can be provided to numb the area. During treatment a method of cooling the skin is employed to minimise discomfort.

Q: How many treatments will I need and how often?

A: Treatments vary for each individual, although several treatments are usually required for successful elimination of pigmented lesions. Treatments are usually scheduled at intervals of three to four weeks to allow for some healing between procedures.

Q: What can I expect after treatment?

A: Immediately after treatment, the treated area may darken slightly. Four to five days following treatment, a light crust often forms and should be allowed to fall off naturally. Fading of the treated lesion can continue for up to six months.

Q: How can I be sure laser treatment is safe?

A: Lasers have been safely used in medicine for over 30 years. Our clinical staff are all trained to the highest standard and regularly update their clinical knowledge and skills.

Risks & Discomforts:

As with all procedures, some risks are involved with laser therapy. It is normal to have redness and some swelling of the area after treatment, and usually subsides after a few days. See below for a more detailed list of risks and complications.

Bruising: Immediately after the laser treatment, the area will appear red and slightly swollen. The discoloration will fade during the next seven to ten days.

Swelling: Areas most likely to swell are under the eyes and neck. With regular ice pack application, swelling should subside within three to five days.

Blisters or scabs: Treated lesions will likely crust then slough over the course of several days or weeks.

Skin Darkening (*hyper-pigmentation*): Occasionally brown/grey darkened areas may occur at the site of laser treated areas, particularly if exposed unprotected skin to sunlight. This reaction, which is more common in patients with olive or dark skin tones, can worsen if the laser-treated area is exposed to the sun. Sun block, factor 50+ with UVA/UVB protection, should be used during and for two years post treatment.



Skin Lightening (*hypo-pigmentation*): Light spots can occur in an area of skin that has already received several treatments. The pale areas usually darken or repigment in three to six months, although in rare cases may be permanent, leading to a loss of tanning ability in the treated areas. Factor 50+ sun block should be used for two years after completion of laser treatment.

Infection: Swelling, pain and oozing in the treatment areas could indicate the development of an infection, requiring a topical or oral antibiotic. You should contact your G.P immediately.

Scarring: While extremely rare after pigment-specific laser therapy, scarring can potentially occur any time that the skin's surface is disrupted. Total sun block should be used for six weeks after completion of laser treatment.

Lesion Persistence or Recurrence: Some pigmented lesions may not disappear completely or may recur after treatment despite the best efforts of the laser.

For more details on laser treatment, contact Eccles Clinic on 01-8302169