LASERS

DEPIGMENTATION WITH 532-NM Q-SWITCHED ND:YAG LASER IN UNIVERSAL VITILIGO: A LONG-TERM FOLLOW UP STUDY OF 4-YEARS

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Introduction: Q-switched (QS) lasers are used for depigmentation in universal vitiligo but there is limited data on long-term results after laser treatment.

Objective: To assess the safety and long-term follow up results of 532-nm QS Nd:YAG laser treatment in universal vitiligo.

Material and Methods: A retrospective study was performed on patients of universal vitiligo who had received QS Nd:YAG laser treatment at 532nm wavelength from 2010 to 2013. All these patients were contacted and called for follow-up. Patients who reported were assessed clinically and information regarding adverse effects and relapse (repigmentation) in the follow-up period was obtained. Any need for topical depigmenting creams or other interventions and overall satisfaction to treatment was also documented.

Results: Records of 34 patients were retrieved out of whom 28 cases reported for the follow-up visit. Duration of follow-up ranged from 2-years to 5-years (mean 2.78). No long-term adverse effects were reported and majority of cases were highly satisfied with treatment. Satisfactory results with >90% clearance of pigment was reported by 89.3% (25/28) cases out of whom 72% (18/25) cases had retained the therapeutic effect with the use of sunscreens with/without intermittent topical depigmentation therapies. In 7 cases partial to complete relapse was observed.

Conclusions: QS Nd:YAG laser at 532-nm wavelength is an effective tool for treating residual pigmentation in universal vitiligo and the therapeutic effect can be maintained in most cases with regular sunscreen use and need-based topical therapies.