



LASERS

EVALUATION OF CARBON DIOXIDE LASER IN THE TREATMENT OF EPIDERMAL NAEVI

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Introduction: Epidermal naevi are benign hamartomatous growths of the skin which are generally asymptomatic with a benign course but are cosmetically disagreeable. Topical treatments such as steroids, calcipotriol, 5 fluorouracil, podophyllin, retinoids and cryotherapy are ineffective and surgical excision results in scar formation. Therapy is often challenging.

Objective: To study the response of carbon dioxide (CO₂) laser in the management of epidermal naevi.

Materials and Methods: We conducted a study of CO₂ laser treatment on 45 patients of epidermal naevi, 24 with verrucous epidermal naevi and 21 with sebaceous naevi. A thorough history and examination was done to rule out any epidermal naevus syndrome. The diagnosis was confirmed by dermoscopy and histopathology. The number of treatment sessions varied from 1 to 8. Laser parameters included wavelength 10,600 nm, spot size 0.1mm, ultrapulse or continuous mode and power of 5-10 watts.

Results: Response was excellent (>90% reduction in lesion size) in 9 (20%), very good (>75% reduction) in 15 (33.3%), good (>50% reduction in lesion size) in 15 (33.3%) and poor (<50% reduction in lesion size) in 6 (13%) patients. The side effects were hyperpigmentation and scarring. Long-term follow-up over a period of 10 months showed a recurrence in 5 (11.1%) patients.

Conclusion: We conclude that CO₂ laser treatment is an effective option with long-term safety, minimal discomfort and rapid recovery.

