



PIGMENTATION

# MICROPIGMENTATION: AN IMPORTANT THERAPEUTIC TOOL FOR DIFFICULT-TO-TREAT VITILIGINOUS AREAS

A Sharma<sup>(1)</sup> - R Dhurat<sup>(1)</sup>

*Lokmanya Tilak Municipal Medical College & General Hospital, Dermatology, Mumbai, India<sup>(1)</sup>*

**Introduction:** Vitiligo, as a depigmentation disorder of functional melanocytopenia, has significant psychosocial stigmatization, especially in the Indian subcontinent. Medical therapies are not always effective, as per Cochrane reviews, and surgical options may not be affordable or amenable to many, especially over difficult areas, viz., acral areas, digits, periocular, bony prominences and hairline vitiligo. It is here, that camouflage techniques take precedence. Of these, permanent solutions are preferred by patients due to sheer convenience and superior results. Tattooing, though employed, is replete with side effects of a lack of depth control and associated side effects. Micropigmentation, or medical tattooing aims to bridge this gap by implanting inert pigment at 6 microns, between the papillary and mid-dermis, thereby offering a solution for treating difficult-to-treat areas, and other non-vitiligo depigmentation.

**Aim and Objectives:** To assess the effectiveness of micropigmentation in difficult to treat areas affected by vitiliginous patches.

**Material and Methods:** 20 patients with stable vitiligo having lesions over difficult-to-treat areas (fingers and toes, palms and soles, lips, eyelids, nipples and areola, elbows and knees and genitals) from the outpatient department were included in the study. The procedure was performed under local anesthesia with an electrical, motorized, micropigmentation machine with a 26G, 35mm depth, 3-needle-combination hand-piece. The period of follow-up was 6 months, and results were analyzed by standardized photography and a subjective questionnaire.

**Results:** Cosmetically acceptable results were seen in all patients. Patients with darker skin types, viz., IV and V showed better improvement than others. No allergic reactions to the pigment or koebnerization of the vitiligo were noted.

**Conclusions:** Micropigmentation for vitiligo is a relatively safe, and effective option for stable vitiligo affecting areas which have been conventionally poor responders to other modalities of treatment. It is a versatile tool in a Vitiligo specialist's therapeutic armamentarium to





tackle unconventional scenarios.

