



LASERS

SUCCESSFUL USE OF FRACTIONAL ERBIUM LASER IN REFRACTORY VITILIGO: A 40 CASE SERIES FROM RURAL INDIA!

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Introduction: Re-pigmentation of extremities or bony prominences in a vitlgo pt is poor due to the reduced numbers medical treatment, but combination with surgical methods will improve the outcome. Ablative lasers known to stimulate melanocyte stem cells and enhance drug absorption and autoinoculation of melanocytes from the margin, but

fractional laser does not ablate the entire epidermis, leaving intact skin between coagulated necrotic columns. Microscopic treatment zones made by fractional laser promote the penetration of externally applied agent, enabling improvement of efficacy.

Materials and methods: We present a case series of 40 patients with the diagnosis of recalcitrant vitlgo who were treated with fractional erbium laser (2940 nm) and followed by topical steroid-phototherapy-oral azithroprine combination.

Results: A total of 40 patients were included: 25 male (60%) and 15 female (40%). The ages were 11–63 years. Most of the patients had lesions over shin, knee & ankle areas and finger-toe margin. Only two patients who took 6 sittings showed >75 repigmentation, 10 patients showed 50–75% after 4 sittings, 15 patients rated in 3rd group (>25–50) and 1/3 cases belongs to 4th group (1–25%) poor results due to few sittings, irregular follow ups and drop outs. Onset of pigmentation was usually reported after the second session of combination treatment in most of the responders. No patient developed noticeable side effects.

Discussion: By combining surgical therapies to medical management can lead to achieve optimal results particularly in refractory cases (non-segmental, resistant localizations). Ablative lasers are preferred as dermabrador for skin grafting at recipient site is well known.

Various grafts are available for such cases, but these need training and time consuming compared to our laser dermabrasion, which is a simple office procedure taking 10–30 minutes of physician & patient with good outcome. More studies are required to optimize the protocol.

