

MELASMA

Melasma is a chronic skin condition causing irregular patches of brown pigmentation over sun exposed areas on the face in a “mask-like” distribution. There are MANY contributing factors, most especially: *UV radiation, inflammation, hormones and genetics*. There is no single treatment that works for everyone.

MAINTENANCE THERAPY: MUST wear UV protection EVERY DAY. You will get UV radiation every day, even through windows which will cause pigment to persist. This is the most important part of your skin care routine.

- *Tinted Physical Sunscreens:* Iron Oxide helps reduce damage from visible lights.
 - Elta MD UV Physical spf 41, Elta MD Elements tinted
- *Moisturizer:* Melasma patients are more sensitive, and use of a moisturizer will reduce inflammation, which can also lead to pigmentation.
 - Elta MD Complex Barrier Protection, Elta MD AM or PM Therapy
- *Prescription Retinoid:* Apply this nightly to help turn-over the skin, acting like a slow peel to diminish the pigment layering. Use a moisturizer before or after if dry.
- *Prescription Bleaching Agent - Hydroquinone:* This will slowly inhibit the production of melanin, Apply to pigment areas in the morning (before or after moisturizer). Takes eight weeks to work.

CLEARING THERAPY: When you have significant pigmentation, direct treatment may be needed to achieve faster improvement.

CHEMICAL PEELS

A series of mild-moderate strength dermatologist-grade” peels are most helpful for melasma.

- 3-5 peels, spaced 2-4 weeks apart: \$175/peel
- Peel effect in 1-3 days (flaking), most find a fast/easy recovery, no time off needed.

LASER

Dr. Tokarz might test spot areas using laser or light energy to determine if your skin can tolerate this therapy. Often patients with melasma have underlying rosacea and reducing redness can improve the overall skin tone.

- IPL: \$250-350/treatment
- Alex Laser (755nm): \$250-\$350/treatment
- Test spots (included in consult or appointment fee)