

PIMA DERMATOLOGY

ADULT / PEDIATRIC / COSMETIC / LASER & SKIN SURGERY

Brown Spot Removal

Age / Liver Spots

95% of the population, at some time during their life, develop age spots. These brown pigment spots, often called “liver spots” or “age spots”, are the result of chronic sun exposure, prior skin redness or inflammation or hormonal influences. Brown spots typically occur on the face, neck, chest, hands and other sun exposed areas. Most of these skin discolorations are a cosmetic issue and are treatable. On occasion, if these spots change color or thicken, they may need to be evaluated by your Provider.

What are my treatment options?

1. Home Treatments:

Home Treatments may be recommended for your skin type and complexion; they usually combine the use of a lightening cream and a broad spectrum sunscreen. Often a Vitamin-A cream, such as Retin-A, is also recommended. Follow-up office visits are advised at 3 - 6 month intervals to monitor your progress and make necessary adjustments in your treatment program.

2. Office Treatments:

A series of **light acid peel(s)** can be applied in our Cosmetic Department to augment and quicken the results of your home treatment. The strength and type of acid applied depends on your skin type and the depth of skin discoloration. A mild, superficial peel with glycolic acid, Jessner’s solution, or a salicylic acid is normally recommended. These procedures are usually performed in a series of 3 - 6 peels at 2 - 4 week intervals. A light acid peel generally causes some mild redness, but no disruption in your activities. These light peels will result in a more uniform skin tone and color.

On occasion, a **stronger acid** peeling agent (**TCA**) will be applied to more stubborn lesions. TCA is an acid that is utilized at various strengths. A crust or scab is generally present for a number of days following this treatment.

3. Liquid Nitrogen:

Liquid nitrogen therapy is also an effective treatment for smaller and fewer brown spots. Treatments are performed safely and comfortably often in one treatment session. A crust or scab will usually develop at the treated site for a few days and will go away within a week or less. There is some risk of skin lightening at the site following treatment.

4. Laser Treatments:

There are several new laser treatments available to remove certain skin discolorations. The current laser options in our office include the **Trivantage Laser** or the **VPC Laser**. These devices precisely target the brown pigment and leave an immediate, small brown or gray surface change, which scabs and falls off over a period of 5 - 10 days. These lasers are the most effective devices for brown spot removal, typically yielding excellent results in 1 - 2 sessions.

5. Intense Pulsed Light Treatment “IPL”:

Pima Dermatology currently has the **Starlux IPL** system for improvement of brown and red spots. These treatments utilize a cooling gel which contacts and cools the skin and makes the treatments quite comfortable. There is often some brown scaling or scabbing that occurs for several days to a week following these treatments. Typically the treatments are less costly and more gentle than lasers, but may require 2 - 5 treatments to obtain the best results.

Please see reverse side of page.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Do the Laser or light treatments hurt?

Most Laser or light procedures for brown spots are performed without anesthesia. You may feel a slight stinging or burning sensation, similar to a rubber band snapping. During the procedure, however, the treatments are usually well-tolerated. You may request a topical anesthetic agent, which is applied in advance of the treatment, for your optimal comfort.

How long does it take to heal?

Depending on the laser used, scabbing may last between 7 - 14 days. After the scab separates, the skin may be pink for a few weeks. This pink color will slowly fade and normalize over the following 2 - 6 weeks.

What are the risks of these procedures?

With any of these procedures, a crust can develop, an infection can occur or a scar may form. This is very rare, and as long as you follow-up with us if any questions or concerns arise, the risk of scarring is minimal. There can be a prolonged whitish area of the skin after some treatments. This complication is exceedingly rare with laser or light treatment. It is more common as a response to Liquid Nitrogen Therapy. We tend to use the laser or light device in any area where there is a cosmetic concern.

After my treatment, how do I prevent these brown spots from returning?

Preventive maintenance is key. The use of a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) Zinc Oxide and/or Titanium Dioxide sunscreen is very important. In addition, several light freshening facial peels can help blend treatment areas and add a more uniform and glowing skin surface. An ongoing home care program with Vitamin A, Glycolic Acid, or Vitamin C products is often recommended in addition to regular sunscreen use.

How do I know if Laser Surgery is right for me?

Gerald N. Goldberg, MD or one of our highly-trained Providers will consult with you about your condition before making any decisions about which treatment to recommend. We will consider your skin type, the results you desire, and your specific skin care needs to customize the treatment that is best for you.

All treatments are performed in the comfort of our in-office Laser Center. Pima Dermatology has one of the most experienced and comprehensive Laser Centers in the Southwestern United States.

If you have questions or want to schedule a consultation,
please contact our office at **520.795.7729**.

Please visit our website at **www.pimaderm.com** for before and after photos and more information about other services we provide.