

# Light-based skin treatment offers people a way to look younger

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As baby boomers age, the demand for younger looking and younger acting skin has grown.

Many treatments and products designed for this are making their way into the mainstream, and one of those is intense pulsed light (IPL).

First introduced in the 1990s, IPL represents a useful tool in the treatment of some dermatological conditions such as pigmented disorders, age spots, flushing, rosacea and dilated blood vessels.

Intense pulsed light also is used for collagen stimulation and hair removal.

IPL is different from laser in that it is polychromatic, non-coherent and broad spectrum.

Light from a laser beam is very narrow, only covering a small spot at a time, while IPL coverage is several times the area and therefore treatments are much quicker.

An IPL photo facial is a gentle, state-of-the-art approach to making your skin look younger and smoother. The process treats the full face, neck, chest or hands, rather than simply one isolated area or imperfection.

A series of IPL photo facial treatments can rejuvenate your complexion without downtime or a

- prolonged recovery process.  
IPL treatment is based on light absorption in melanin and hemoglobin.  
Treatments are most efficient in patients with light skin who are not tanned at the time of treatment.  
Pre treatment protocols include the cessation of the use of alpha hydroxy acid and retinols for one week prior to treatment.  
In addition, no UV (ultraviolet radiation/rays) exposure for two weeks prior to treatment and no use of medicines that would make one photosensitive.  
Pain tolerance is very individual from person to person. Expect some discomfort and a warming snap-like sensation on the skin during treatment.  
This is what you can expect from treatment; for freckles and age spots, the dark spots generally look darker for three to 21 days as the pigmentation comes to the surface of skin and is shed naturally.  
For veins, generally the skin looks slightly redder after treatment for two to five days.  
The vascular lesions dissipate into the lymphatic system for excretion.
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Collagen growth will happen because the light bypasses the outer layer of the skin and gently heats the cells in the deeper layer of skin.

These cells called fibroblasts start to produce more collagen which improves skin texture.

Fine lines and wrinkles are reduced, enlarged pores, minor pitting and scarring diminish and fade.

You will need between one and three treatments for successful reduction of pigmented lesions.

If you want to maintain collagen stimulation,

treatment is recommended every six to 12 months.

Hair growth becomes sparser with each session and all treated hair should shed within about two weeks.

A note about hair — hair grows in constant cycles.

Firstly, hairs are actively growing then they become dormant, and finally they loosen and shed, only to be replaced by more new actively growing hairs.

Only hair follicles in the active growth stage are disabled by IPL treatments.

Hairs in the dormant stage of the growth cycle normally remain anchored in the follicles for weeks or months, depending on their location, but their follicles

and associated hair germination cells are not disabled by IPL treatments.

These follicles will be treated in subsequent sessions. This is why you need between six and 10 treatments.

Washington now allows for licensed master aestheticians to perform laser and light therapies once the patient has the approval of a doctor or nurse practitioner.

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