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Er:YAG Laser Treatment of Verrucous Epidermal Nevi

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ABSTRACT

Background. The term verrucous epidermal nevi refers to benign hyperplasia of the epidermis. Numerous treatment modalities have been tried, but no ideal treatment is yet available. We would like to present our experience with Er:YAG laser ablation in the treatment of verrucous epidermal nevi.

Objective. The purpose of this study is to assess the long-term results of Er:YAG laser treatment of verrucous epidermal nevi.

Methods. Twenty patients with verrucous epidermal nevi were treated with Er:YAG laser. Twelve patients were treated with the variable-pulsed Er:YAG laser, a 5-mm handpiece at the setting of 7.0 to 7.5 J/cm², at a 500- μ s pulse duration. The dual-mode Er:YAG laser, with a 2-mm handpiece at the setting of 6.3 J/cm², at a 350- μ s pulse duration (25 microns ablation), was used in eight patients. The laser was fired at 5 Hz until all epidermal nevi were removed. The results of treatment were evaluated for the changes of skin lesions, texture, and color by physicians over a 24-month period.

Results. After a single laser treatment, successful elimination of the verrucous epidermal nevi was observed in 15 patients. Five patients (25%) showed a relapse within 1 year after the treatment. Postoperative healing time was 7 to 10 days. Erythema occurred in all patients after the laser treatment and subsided in 2 months. Postinflammatory hyperpigmentation occurred in two patients (10%). One patient (5%) experienced transient hypopigmentation. Mild to moderate postoperative acne flare-up occurred in one patient (5%) with facial lesions. No other adverse effects, including scarring, were observed.

Conclusion. The Er:YAG laser ablation is an effective, safe, and nonscarring method for the treatment of verrucous epidermal nevi.