



IPL: What is it?

Intense Pulse Light, or IPL, is a type of energy device that produces a very powerful and quick flash of light that can be absorbed by skin that has unwanted superficial blood vessels or pigmented lesions in the brown spectrum of colors. Since these colors absorb the energy of the IPL light, they may be diminished over time and several treatments. Depending on what we are trying to achieve, red or brown targets are heated and are selectively destroyed by certain light wavelengths without damaging surrounding tissues. IPL is also sometimes referred to as BBL (broadband light), or Photofacial.

What does it treat?

- Photodamage - Brown spots/Sun spots
- Pigmented lesions - freckles, liver spots
- Rosacea
- Superficial blood vessels - telangiectasias/spider veins on face and neck
- Acne

How is it performed?

The treatment area is cleansed. A cool gel is applied to the area being treated. Eye protection is worn to protect the patient's eyes from the light. With the patient in a comfortable, relaxed position, the IPL handpiece is gently applied to the skin and light pulses are applied. Treatments usually take approximately 30 minutes, depending on which area is being treated.

Prior to the treatment:

It is imperative that the treatment area not be tan on the day of the procedure. Discontinue any self tanning product at least 2 weeks before the procedure. We also ask that you discontinue any Retinol product 3 days before the treatment.

After the treatment:

After the procedure, the skin will be red and flushed in appearance in a similar way to a mild sunburn. You may also experience bruising and swelling on the area being treated. If you are treating brown spots, the spots will appear darker at first, then lighten over a period of 1-2 weeks. If you are treating redness, you may notice more redness or bruising immediately after the procedure, and improve over the next week. You may continue your normal skincare routine immediately after the treatment, and you can apply makeup to cover any temporary discoloration. You MUST wear sun protection regularly after the procedure. Sunlight can cause the brown spots to darken, so it is imperative that you wear a wide brimmed hat and sunscreen while outdoors. We also recommend that you use a Retinol and Vitamin C product daily to maintain your results.

How many treatments will I need?

We recommend an initial series of 3-5 treatments, spaced about a month apart. Most people do a series of treatments about once a year for maintenance.

Illinois Dermatology Institute

Dr. David Lorber Dr. Nona Craig Dr. Jennifer Croix Dr. Sara Dickie
Erin Melley, PA-C Amanda Schallman, PA-C