

## Why Do I Have These Dark Spots On My Face?



Dark spots on the face are a common finding in all ethnic and age groups. However, they increase as we age. This article will review the various causes and treatment options that providers at Hamzavi/ Dermatology Specialist may offer.

### Why do we get dark spots

- 1) You can develop congenital areas of discoloration. This is something you are born with. Freckles and birthmarks fall into this category.
- 2) Acquired areas of brown discoloration fall into three groups, hormonal factors, post-acne effects and sun damage. Hormonal triggers are a factor in melasma. This is a brown discoloration that occurs around the cheeks and is related to pregnancy or contraceptive use in some patients. However, in many patients these are not a factor but 90% of patients are women.

- 3) Another cause of discoloration occurs in acne prone individuals who may develop brown discoloration after an acne outbreak. This is called post inflammatory hyperpigmentation.

Another cause of brown discolorations comes from excessive sun exposure. These are often called lentigines. Lentigines are not considered cancerous lesions and must be differentiated from certain skin cancers.

### So what can you do?

- 4) Prevention
  - a. Sunscreens w/ hats provide some but not complete protection
- 5) Treatment
  - a. Over the counter bleaching creams-often plant derived w/ variable efficacy. These are mostly derived from berries with antioxidant effects.
  - b. Prescription bleaching cream with an agent know as hydroquinone
  - c. Prescription combination bleaching creams are the most effective option in the prescription category.
  - d. Chemical peels can be done in combination with the above treatments. They range from simple peels with a quick recovery to peels with a prolonged recovery period
  - e. Laser in combination with any of the above options can be a useful adjunct to the above treatments

(cont.)

f. There is also research going into oral medications and new topical products.

g. All these options are available at Hamzavi/ Dermatology Specialists. Please ask your provider about which option might be helpful for you.

If you have further questions, please call us to schedule an appointment.

*-Iltefat Hamzavi, M.D*

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## Happy New Year!

We hope you all enjoyed your Holidays and are ready to start a fresh new year. It was a wonderful 2016 for our company and it's growth. We have a total of 8 locations and 24 providers that we are proud to serve patients of Southeast Michigan. We are always looking for ways to expand services with advanced technology and locations to better serve you. Please continue reading our newsletters for interesting articles and up to date information on the company. We are thankful for all our patients support over the years and wishing you all the best in 2017.

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- Laser Therapy
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- Eczema
- Psoriasis
- Vitiligo

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