



Carel's Pharmacy & Compounding Center

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Melasma

Melasma is a skin condition presenting as brown patches on the face of adults. Both sides of the face are usually affected. The most common sites of involvement are the cheeks, bridge of nose, forehead, and upper lip.

Who gets melasma?

Melasma mostly occurs in women and is especially common in women aged 20-40. It is more common in dark skin races than in fair skins.

What causes melasma?

The precise cause of melasma is unknown. People with a family history of melasma are more likely to develop melasma themselves. A change in hormonal status may trigger melasma. It is commonly associated with pregnancy and called chloasma, or the "mask of pregnancy" which normally fades a few months after delivery. Melasma also occurs as a side-effect of taking contraceptive pills and injected depot contraceptive preparations. It may also be noticed in apparently healthy, normal, non-pregnant women where it is presumed to be due to some mild and harmless hormonal imbalance.

Sun exposure contributes to melasma. Ultraviolet light from the sun, and even very strong light from light bulbs, can stimulate pigment-producing cells, or melanocytes in the skin. People with skin of color have more active melanocytes than those with light skin. These melanocytes produce a large amount of pigment under normal conditions, but this production increases even further when stimulated by light exposure or an increase in hormone levels. Incidental exposure to the sun is mainly the reason for recurrences of melasma.

Any irritation of the skin may cause an increase in pigmentation in dark-skinned individuals, which may also worsen melasma. Melasma is not associated with any internal diseases or organ malfunction.

How is melasma diagnosed?

Because melasma is common, and has a characteristic appearance on the face, most patients can be diagnosed simply by a skin examination. Occasionally a skin biopsy is necessary to differentiate melasma from other conditions.

This month's featured compound is **Bleaching Cream**.

Bleaching Cream is a compounded medication used to treat freckles, age spots and other skin discolorations that may occur due to pregnancy, skin trauma or the use of birth control pills, etc. Bleaching Cream contains Hydroquinone 6%, Tretinoin 0.1%, and Triamcinolone 0.025%. It is applied once daily at bedtime to affected area. Bleaching Cream is stronger than most commercially available products and more cost efficient. It is normally prescribed in a 1 oz. jar. Patients should protect skin from sun exposure while using Bleaching Cream.

Please visit our website at www.carelspharmacy.com If you have any questions regarding these therapies or any other medication related problems, please call our specially trained compounding pharmacist and staff at (580) 355-4540.