



Vbeam® INFORMATION

The Vbeam® Laser delivers an intense but gentle burst of yellow light to selectively targeted areas of the skin. This light is absorbed by blood vessels or melanin (pigment) in the skin depending on the condition being treated. The laser light can also help stimulate new collagen formation, resulting in a degree of skin 'remodelling'.

What can be treated?

- Redness of the face and neck
- Broken capillaries
- Spider naevi
- Rosacea
- Port wine stains and some other birthmarks
- Sun/age spots
- Early scars and red stretchmarks
- Fine lines and wrinkles
- Mild acne scarring

What does the treatment involve?

Most patients are reclined or lying down depending on the area being treated. Both the patient and the doctor will be wearing protective eyewear (usually goggles or metal eye shields for the patient). The laser will then be calibrated and the treatment parameters set based on the condition being treated. You will hear a number of 'beeping' sounds while the laser does this. Each condition and each individual is unique, and these settings will be individualised to maximize the results you will see following treatment.

Rarely before definitive treatment is carried out, small areas may be treated at different settings to determine the most suitable power settings and monitor response ('test patches'). After an evaluation period of 6-8 weeks, the area is then assessed and treatment can be started using the appropriate parameters.

Does the treatment hurt?

The Vbeam® laser has a special Dynamic Cooling Device (DCD), which delivers a very cold spray to the skin just before the laser pulse is emitted. This helps to minimise the discomfort during treatment and side effects by protecting the top layers of the skin. Each treatment pulse feels a little like an elastic band being 'snapped' against the skin. You may also feel some warmth. Most people tolerate the treatment without anaesthetic. If you do find the treatment too uncomfortable, then an anaesthetic cream can be used, but needs to be applied to the areas at least 60mins prior to the procedure.

Is treatment safe?

Yes. The pulsed dye lasers have been successfully used since the 1980's for treatment of port wine stain birthmarks in infants and young children. Over the years, laser technology has improved dramatically, ensuring side effects are minimal. The Perfecta Laser's Dynamic Cooling Device sprays a cold mist onto the targeted area of skin before each laser pulse, maximizing comfort and also protecting the skin during treatment. It is best to avoid treatment when the skin is heavily tanned, as this does increase the risk of pigment loss or lightening. It is also important that you follow your doctor's post-treatment instructions.

What are the side effects of treatment?

There will be some mild discomfort during the treatment. Immediately after the treatment the area will appear red, and mildly swollen (sunburn like). You may also have some degree of bruising (purpura). The degree of bruising will depend on the condition being treated and the treatment settings used (for example, port wine stains will usually always bruise following treatment). Immediately after treatment, an ice or cold pack will be given to you and the use of ice/iced water compresses over the next 24-48 hours will help to decrease swelling.

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Having someone drive you home after the treatment is useful so that you can apply the cold compresses to the treated area. Staying upright during the day and sleeping on an extra pillow at night will also help to decrease any swelling.

Redness and swelling will usually decrease over 3-5 days or so. Bruising will usually settle over 7-14 days depending on its severity. Blistering or crusting is unusual (although can occur in scars), but some dryness or flakiness is common and will settle with the use of moisturiser. Make-up can be applied to the treated areas providing that it is applied and removed very gently. If brown 'sun' spots are being treated, initial redness and swelling occur as above. The treated areas will also darken, lightly crust and flake off over the following 1-2 weeks in post patients.

Less common side effects include pigmentary changes (lightening or darkening of the skin in the treated areas), thinning of the skin (atrophy) and scarring. As the laser usually delivers a circular pulse of laser light, 'patterning' and demarcation between treated and untreated areas may sometimes be seen early in the treatment programme. Some lesions do not respond as well as expected and limited improvement may be seen.

Are there any special precautions I need to take before or after treatment?

It is recommended that you avoid sun exposure before and for 6 weeks following the treatment to minimize side effects. An SPF 30+ sunscreen should be worn daily during this time (even on cloudy days). This helps to reduce the risk of brown pigmentation (increase in skin colour). If it does occur, it is usually temporary, but can take a few months to fade.

Applying ice packs or cold compresses to the treatment areas on and off for 24-48 hours following treatment will help minimize swelling, bruising and discomfort.

If you do develop any blistering or crusting, do not pick the scabbing off. Gently clean the areas and apply a thin smear of Vaseline twice daily until healed. Make sure you let your doctor know at your next consultation that this has occurred.

It is best to use gentle cleansers and moisturisers during the healing phase. Avoid facial scrubs or potentially irritating creams (for example, those containing retinoids/retinols and AHA). If having treatment for redness or broken capillaries, it is best to avoid excessive aerobic activity or flushing triggers for 1-2 weeks following treatment.

How soon will I see results of my treatment?

Again, this will depend a little on the condition being treated and the number of treatments required for clearance. Patients will usually notice some improvement within the first 6-8 weeks following treatment. Other beneficial effects such as firming and tightening of the skin may also be seen but may take a little longer. This is due to the stimulation of new collagen production (an important support structure of the skin) and is the basis of the lasers' use in treating fine lines and wrinkles and for photo-rejuvenation.

How many treatments will I require?

Response to therapy is dependent upon the initial condition. Patients with facial redness and blood vessels will typically require an average of 2-3 treatments. Patients with port-wine stains may need to be treated on multiple occasions. The average adult may require 6-10 treatments to lighten the port-wine stain. Facial port wine stains usually do best, fading on average, 50%-70% of the initial base colour. Patients being treated for acne scarring and fine lines and wrinkles may need up to 6 treatments.

Are the results of the Vbeam® laser permanent?

This depends on the condition being treated, and lifestyle of the patient. For example, if you are having redness or broken capillaries treated, but have a strong tendency to flush and blush, or do not avoid flushing triggers, the condition may recur over a period of years. If you are having brown sunspots treated, but continue to spend time in the sun without adequate sun protection, it is likely that your sun spots will return. Talk to your doctor about your goals and expectations of treatment.

How much does the treatment cost?

This will depend on the size of the area being treated as well as the condition being treated. You will be provided with an estimate of the treatment cost at the time of your consultation. There is some Medicare rebate for the treatment of patients with port wine stains and birthmarks, and for some patients with redness or broken capillaries on the head and neck. Generally private health funds do not cover treatment.

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