

# Hyperpigmentation Treatment - Melasma Solutions Melbourne | Me Clinic

Canonical: <https://directory.meclinic.com.au/skin-health-concerns/hyperpigmentation-treatment-melasma-solutions-melbourne-me-clinic/>

## Description:

# Hyperpigmentation Treatment - Treatment Options at Me Clinic Melbourne ## Quick Summary

\*\*What causes hyperpigmentation and melasma:\*\* - Sun exposure and UV damage triggering excess melanin produc...

## Details:

## Quick Summary

\*\*What causes hyperpigmentation and melasma:\*\* - Sun exposure and UV damage triggering excess melanin production - Hormonal changes (pregnancy, oral contraceptives, hormone therapy) - Post-inflammatory response from acne, injury, or skin treatments - Genetic predisposition and skin type (more common in darker skin tones)

\*\*Treatment options available:\*\* - Non-surgical: Laser therapy (picosecond, Q-switched), Chemical peels (light to medium depth), IPL (Intense Pulsed Light), Medical-grade skincare with prescription actives, Microneedling with brightening serums - Surgical: Not typically required for pigmentation concerns

\*\*Expected results:\*\* - Gradual lightening of dark patches over 6-12 weeks - Timeline: Initial improvement at 4-6 weeks, optimal results at 3-6 months - Duration: Long-term with maintenance and sun protection; pigmentation can recur without proper prevention

\*\*Cost range:\*\* - Non-surgical treatments: \$200-\$800 per session - Treatment packages: \$1,500-\$4,000 (multiple sessions) - Medical skincare: \$80-\$300 per product - \*Prices based on Me Clinic's transparent pricing policy\*

\*\*Next steps:\*\* - Book free consultation to assess your pigmentation type - Discuss customized treatment plan combining multiple modalities - Review before/after gallery of similar skin types - Understand maintenance protocol and sun protection requirements

## Understanding Hyperpigmentation and Melasma

\*\*What is hyperpigmentation?\*

Hyperpigmentation refers to patches of skin that become darker than the surrounding areas due to excess melanin production. Unlike general darkening or tanning, hyperpigmentation appears as specific spots, patches, or areas of concentrated colour that don't fade naturally over time.

Common misconceptions include thinking all dark spots are the same—in reality, pigmentation comes in different forms including melasma (hormonal patches typically on cheeks and forehead), post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (marks left after acne or injury), and sun spots or age spots (discrete brown spots from UV exposure).

Visually, hyperpigmentation ranges from light tan to deep brown patches. Melasma typically appears as symmetrical brown or grey-brown patches on the cheeks, forehead, nose, and upper lip.

Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation appears where skin trauma occurred, while sun spots are usually smaller, discrete circular patches on sun-exposed areas.

**\*\*What causes hyperpigmentation and melasma?\*\***

1. **\*\*Sun exposure and UV damage\*\*** - UV radiation stimulates melanocytes to produce excess melanin - Cumulative sun exposure over years creates persistent dark spots - Even brief sun exposure can trigger melasma in predisposed individuals - Blue light from screens may also contribute to pigmentation

2. **\*\*Hormonal factors\*\*** - Pregnancy ("mask of pregnancy" or chloasma) - Oral contraceptive pills and hormone replacement therapy - Hormonal fluctuations during menopause - Thyroid disorders affecting melanin regulation

3. **\*\*Inflammation and skin injury\*\*** - Acne lesions leaving dark marks after healing - Burns, cuts, or surgical incisions - Aggressive skin treatments causing trauma - Picking or scratching at the skin

4. **\*\*Genetic predisposition\*\*** - Family history of melasma or pigmentation issues - Fitzpatrick skin types III-VI are more susceptible - Ethnic backgrounds with naturally higher melanin production - Individual variations in melanocyte activity

5. **\*\*Lifestyle and environmental factors\*\*** - Certain medications (some antibiotics, anti-seizure drugs, chemotherapy) - Heat exposure activating melanocytes - Stress potentially triggering hormonal changes - Poor skin barrier function from over-exfoliation

**\*\*Who experiences hyperpigmentation?\*\***

Hyperpigmentation affects people of all ages and skin types, though certain patterns emerge:

- **\*\*Age range:\*\*** Can begin in teenage years with post-acne marks; melasma typically starts in 20s-40s; sun spots generally appear 40+ - **\*\*Gender prevalence:\*\*** Melasma affects women 9 times more often than men due to hormonal factors - **\*\*Skin type:\*\*** More visible and persistent in medium to darker skin tones (Fitzpatrick III-VI), though all skin types can develop pigmentation - **\*\*When it becomes noticeable:\*\*** Often triggered by specific events—pregnancy, starting contraceptives, prolonged sun exposure, or following inflammatory skin conditions

**\*\*Why it matters\*\***

Beyond the aesthetic concern of uneven skin tone, hyperpigmentation can significantly impact confidence and quality of life. Many people feel self-conscious about pigmentation patches, particularly melasma on the face which can be difficult to conceal with makeup.

The psychological impact shouldn't be underestimated—studies show pigmentation concerns affect self-esteem and social interactions. Additionally, persistent pigmentation can signal underlying health issues such as hormonal imbalances or indicate inadequate sun protection, which carries its own health risks.

From a treatment perspective, pigmentation is notoriously challenging to treat and requires patience, consistency, and a multi-modal approach. Understanding your pigmentation type and triggers is the first step toward effective management.

## ## Treatment Options Comparison

### ### Non-Surgical Treatments

#### **\*\*1. Laser Therapy\*\***

**\*Picosecond Lasers (e.g., PicoWay, PicoSure)\* - \*\*How it works:\*\* Ultra-short laser pulses shatter pigment particles into tiny fragments that the body's immune system can naturally eliminate. The rapid pulse duration creates less heat, reducing risk of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. - \*\*Best for:\*\* Stubborn melasma, sun spots, post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, mixed pigmentation types, darker skin tones (when appropriately calibrated) - \*\*Procedure time:\*\* 20-30 minutes - \*\*Downtime:\*\* Minimal; mild redness for 1-2 days, possible temporary darkening of treated spots before they fade - \*\*Treatment sessions:\*\* 3-6 sessions spaced 4-6 weeks apart - \*\*Results appear:\*\* Gradual lightening over 2-3 weeks after each session - \*\*Results last:\*\* Long-term with sun protection; maintenance sessions may be needed annually - \*\*Cost range:\*\* \$400-\$800 per session - \*\*Pros:\*\* Effective for resistant pigmentation, suitable for darker skin types, minimal downtime, treats deeper pigment - \*\*Cons:\*\* Multiple sessions required, temporary darkening possible, not suitable during active melasma flare-ups**

**\*Q-Switched Nd:YAG Laser\* - \*\*How it works:\*\* Targets pigment at specific wavelengths (1064nm for deeper pigment, 532nm for superficial pigment) breaking apart melanin deposits - \*\*Best for:\*\* Deeper dermal melasma, sun spots, resistant pigmentation, specific wavelength targeting - \*\*Procedure time:\*\* 15-25 minutes - \*\*Downtime:\*\* 3-7 days of darkening/crusting of treated spots before shedding - \*\*Treatment sessions:\*\* 4-8 sessions spaced 4-8 weeks apart - \*\*Results appear:\*\* 1-2 weeks after each session as treated areas flake off - \*\*Results last:\*\* 6-12 months with proper sun protection and maintenance - \*\*Cost range:\*\* \$350-\$700 per session - \*\*Pros:\*\* Precise targeting, effective on deep pigment, proven track record - \*\*Cons:\*\* Higher risk of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation in darker skin, visible peeling phase, requires careful post-care**

## **\*\*2. Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) Therapy\*\***

- **\*\*How it works:\*\* Broad-spectrum light targets melanin in the skin, heating and breaking up pigmented cells which then rise to the surface and flake off over 1-2 weeks - \*\*Best for:\*\* Sun damage, age spots, freckles, general skin tone improvement, combination with red veins or rosacea treatment - \*\*Procedure time:\*\* 20-40 minutes depending on treatment area - \*\*Downtime:\*\* Treated spots darken significantly for 5-10 days before flaking off; mild swelling for 24 hours - \*\*Treatment sessions:\*\* 3-5 sessions spaced 3-4 weeks apart - \*\*Results appear:\*\* Gradual improvement after each session; dramatic change after spots shed - \*\*Results last:\*\* 1-2 years with sun protection; touch-ups recommended - \*\*Cost range:\*\* \$300-\$600 per session - \*\*Pros:\*\* Treats multiple concerns simultaneously, relatively gentle, good for overall tone improvement - \*\*Cons:\*\* NOT suitable for darker skin tones (Fitzpatrick IV and above), visible darkening before lightening, less effective on melasma**

## **\*\*3. Chemical Peels\*\***

**\*Light Peels (Glycolic, Lactic, Mandelic Acid)\* - \*\*How it works:\*\* Exfoliates the surface layer of skin, removing dead cells containing excess melanin and stimulating cell turnover - \*\*Best for:\*\* Mild hyperpigmentation, maintaining results, sensitive skin, regular treatments - \*\*Depth:\*\* Epidermis only - \*\*Downtime:\*\* Minimal; slight flaking for 2-3 days - \*\*Treatment sessions:\*\* Series of 4-6 peels every 2-4 weeks - \*\*Cost range:\*\* \$150-\$300 per peel - \*\*Results:\*\* Subtle gradual lightening with consistent treatments**

**\*Medium Peels (TCA 20-35%)\* - \*\*How it works:\*\* Penetrates to upper dermis, removing pigmented cells at deeper levels and triggering collagen renewal - \*\*Best for:\*\* Moderate to severe hyperpigmentation, melasma, combination with fine lines/texture concerns - \*\*Depth:\*\* Upper to mid dermis - \*\*Downtime:\*\* 5-7 days of significant peeling and redness; social downtime required - \*\*Treatment sessions:\*\* 1-3 peels spaced 6-8 weeks apart - \*\*Cost range:\*\* \$400-\$700 per peel - \*\*Results:\*\* More dramatic lightening; improvement in skin texture and tone**

**\*Combination/Specialty Peels (Cosmelan, Dermamelan)\* - \*\*How it works:\*\* Multi-phase treatment combining in-clinic intensive peel with strict home maintenance regime; inhibits melanin production while exfoliating existing pigmentation - \*\*Best for:\*\* Severe melasma, resistant hyperpigmentation,**

comprehensive treatment - **Treatment sessions:** Initial intensive treatment followed by 4-6 month home protocol - **Downtime:** 7-14 days of significant peeling; strict sun avoidance for months - **Cost range:** \$1,500-\$2,500 for complete program - **Results:** Dramatic improvement in stubborn pigmentation; requires commitment to home protocol

#### **4. Medical-Grade Skincare and Prescription Treatments**

**Prescription Strength Actives** - **Hydroquinone (2-4%):** Gold standard melanin inhibitor; blocks tyrosinase enzyme - **Tretinoin (Retin-A):** Increases cell turnover, enhances penetration of other actives - **Kojic Acid:** Natural tyrosinase inhibitor derived from mushrooms - **Azelaic Acid:** Inhibits melanin and has anti-inflammatory properties - **Tranexamic Acid:** Oral or topical; inhibits melanin synthesis, particularly effective for melasma - **How it works:** Daily application inhibits melanin production, accelerates cell turnover, and gradually fades existing pigmentation - **Best for:** Maintenance between treatments, mild pigmentation, preventing recurrence, combining with in-clinic treatments - **Timeline:** 8-12 weeks for initial improvement; ongoing use for maintenance - **Cost range:** \$80-\$300 per product; typically requires 2-4 products for complete regime - **Downtime:** Possible initial irritation, dryness, or purging with retinoids - **Pros:** Cost-effective, addresses underlying cause, essential for maintaining results - **Cons:** Requires daily commitment, results take time, some actives can irritate

#### **5. Microneedling with Brightening Serums**

- **How it works:** Tiny needles create micro-channels in the skin, allowing deep penetration of brightening serums (vitamin C, tranexamic acid, growth factors) while stimulating collagen production and cell turnover - **Best for:** Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, combining with other treatments, overall skin rejuvenation, improving product absorption - **Procedure time:** 30-45 minutes including numbing - **Downtime:** 1-3 days of redness and sensitivity; minor flaking possible - **Treatment sessions:** 4-6 sessions spaced 4-6 weeks apart - **Results appear:** Gradual improvement over 2-3 months - **Results last:** 6-12 months; maintenance sessions recommended - **Cost range:** \$300-\$600 per session - **Pros:** Minimal downtime, suitable for most skin types, combines well with topical treatments, improves overall skin quality - **Cons:** Multiple sessions needed, slower results than laser, requires proper aftercare to prevent infection

### **### Surgical Treatments**

Surgical treatments are **not typically recommended** for hyperpigmentation or melasma. Unlike structural concerns (wrinkles, sagging), pigmentation is a color/tone issue best addressed through non-invasive modalities that target melanin production and distribution.

Attempting surgical approaches could actually worsen pigmentation through post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation from the trauma of surgery. The rare exception might be excision of a very small, isolated nevus, but this would be for removal rather than treatment of widespread pigmentation.

### **## Choosing the Right Treatment - Decision Guide**

**Consider laser therapy (Picosecond or Q-switched) if:** ✓ You have stubborn, resistant pigmentation that hasn't responded to topicals ✓ You want relatively quick results with minimal downtime ✓ You have mixed depth pigmentation (both surface and deep) ✓ You can commit to strict sun protection post-treatment ✓ You have realistic expectations about gradual improvement ✓ Your skin type has been assessed as suitable (particularly important for darker tones)

**Consider IPL therapy if:** ✓ You have lighter skin (Fitzpatrick I-III) ✓ Your pigmentation is from sun damage rather than hormonal melasma ✓ You want to address multiple concerns (pigmentation plus redness/texture) ✓ You can accommodate the visible darkening phase before lightening ✓ You're looking for overall skin tone improvement

**\*\*Consider chemical peels if:\*\*** ✓ You have mild to moderate pigmentation ✓ You want to improve overall skin texture and tone simultaneously ✓ You prefer a more traditional, well-established treatment ✓ You can accommodate the peeling/downtime phase ✓ You want a cost-effective treatment option ✓ You're willing to do a series of treatments

**\*\*Consider medical-grade skincare as primary treatment if:\*\*** ✓ You have very mild pigmentation ✓ You're maintaining results from in-clinic treatments ✓ You prefer to start conservatively ✓ Budget is a primary concern ✓ You can commit to daily application for months ✓ You want to address the root cause (melanin production)

**\*\*Consider medical skincare as essential adjunct therapy:\*\*** ✓ For ALL pigmentation cases—topical treatments are mandatory regardless of which in-clinic treatment you choose ✓ To prepare skin before in-clinic treatments ✓ To maintain results long-term ✓ To prevent pigmentation recurrence

**\*\*Combination approach (Most Effective):\*\***

The majority of successful pigmentation outcomes at Me Clinic involve strategic combination therapy:

**\*\*Common effective combinations:\*\*** 1. **\*\*Moderate melasma protocol:\*\*** - 4-6 weeks prescription skincare (hydroquinone + tretinoin) - Picosecond laser series (3-4 sessions) - Maintenance with medical skincare and quarterly light peels

2. **\*\*Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation protocol:\*\*** - Microneedling with brightening serums (4 sessions) - Between-session medical skincare with azelaic acid and niacinamide - Q-switched laser for any persistent deeper spots

3. **\*\*Sun damage protocol:\*\*** - IPL therapy series (3-4 sessions) - Medium-depth peel for stubborn areas - Medical-grade vitamin C and SPF 50+ for maintenance

4. **\*\*Stubborn melasma protocol:\*\*** - Cosmelan or Dermamelan peel program - Tranexamic acid oral and topical - Gentle picosecond laser after 3 months for any resistant patches

Your Me Clinic practitioner will assess your specific pigmentation type, skin condition, lifestyle factors, and treatment goals to recommend the optimal combination protocol during your consultation.

## ## What to Expect at Me Clinic

### **\*\*1. Initial Consultation (Free)\*\***

Your comprehensive pigmentation assessment includes: - Detailed examination of pigmentation pattern, depth, and type using specialized skin analysis technology - Wood's lamp examination to determine if pigment is epidermal (surface) or dermal (deep) - Discussion of triggers: hormonal history, sun exposure, previous treatments, medications - Medical history review including thyroid function, hormonal status, skin sensitivity - Photography for tracking progress over time - Treatment options explained with realistic expectations set - Transparent pricing provided for recommended protocol - Before/after gallery review of patients with similar pigmentation

### **\*\*2. Treatment Planning\*\***

Your customized treatment plan will include: - Primary treatment modality recommendation (laser, peel, or combination) - Number of sessions required and spacing between treatments - Pre-treatment skincare protocol (typically 2-4 weeks of preparation) - Post-treatment care requirements and expected downtime - Maintenance protocol for long-term results - Sun protection strategy (essential for success) - Cost breakdown for complete treatment course - Timeline for expected results

### **\*\*3. The Me Clinic Difference\*\***

**\*\*Responsible Cosmetic Medicine™ for Pigmentation Treatment\*\***

Our approach to hyperpigmentation prioritizes: - **Conservative treatment first:** Starting with proven topical protocols before progressing to energy-based treatments - **Skin-type appropriate technology:** Careful laser selection and settings for darker skin tones to prevent post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation - **Realistic expectations:** Acknowledging that melasma is chronic and requires ongoing management, not a one-time "cure" - **Comprehensive approach:** Combining in-clinic treatments with mandatory home skincare and lifestyle modifications - **Sun protection education:** Rigorous emphasis on daily SPF 50+ and sun avoidance as non-negotiable for results

#### **Experienced Practitioners with Pigmentation Expertise**

- Specialist cosmetic physicians with advanced training in treating pigmentation in diverse skin types - Registered nurses with extensive experience in laser safety and post-treatment care - Over 60,000 non-surgical treatments delivered including thousands of pigmentation cases - Regular clinical meetings to review complex cases and outcomes - Ongoing education in latest pigmentation research and treatment protocols

#### **Transparent Pricing**

All pigmentation treatment costs are clearly explained: - Per-session pricing for individual treatments - Package pricing for treatment series (often more cost-effective) - Medical skincare costs outlined separately - No hidden fees or surprise charges - Payment plans available for comprehensive treatment protocols - Honest discussion if treatment may not be cost-effective for your particular case

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **How much does hyperpigmentation treatment cost in Melbourne?**

Treatment costs vary significantly based on the type and severity of pigmentation: - **Prescription skincare only:** \$150-\$400 for initial products (2-3 month supply) - **Chemical peels:** \$150-\$700 per session (light to medium depth) - **Laser therapy:** \$350-\$800 per session; typically need 3-6 sessions - **IPL therapy:** \$300-\$600 per session; typically need 3-5 sessions - **Microneedling:** \$300-\$600 per session; typically need 4-6 sessions - **Comprehensive programs (Cosmelan/Dermamelan):** \$1,500-\$2,500 complete

Most patients achieve best results with combination therapy over 3-6 months, with total investment ranging from \$2,000-\$5,000 including home skincare. At Me Clinic, we provide transparent pricing during your free consultation and can create a phased treatment plan to fit your budget.

#### **How long do results last?**

Pigmentation results are highly variable and depend on the underlying cause: - **Sun spots:** Can be permanent if protected from sun, but new spots may develop - **Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation:** Often improves permanently once skin heals - **Melasma:** Chronic condition requiring ongoing maintenance; tends to recur if triggers (sun, hormones) not managed - **Typical maintenance:** Quarterly light peels or annual laser touch-ups, daily medical skincare, religious sun protection

The honest truth: pigmentation, especially melasma, requires lifelong management rather than a one-time cure. Patients who maintain strict sun protection and continue medical-grade skincare typically maintain 70-80% of their improvement long-term.

#### **Is there any downtime?**

Downtime varies by treatment modality: - **Medical skincare:** No downtime, possible mild irritation/dryness initially - **Light chemical peels:** 2-4 days of light flaking, no social downtime - **Medium peels:** 5-7 days significant peeling, social downtime recommended - **Picosecond laser:** 1-2 days mild redness, minimal downtime - **Q-switched laser:** 3-7 days of darkening/crusting of spots - **IPL:** 5-10 days of obvious darkening before spots flake off - **Microneedling:** 1-3 days

redness and sensitivity - **Cosmelan/Dermamelan:** 7-14 days intense peeling phase

Your practitioner will provide detailed downtime expectations based on your specific treatment plan. Many patients schedule treatments before weekends or holidays to accommodate any visible shedding phase.

**Will it look natural?**

The goal of pigmentation treatment is to restore even, natural skin tone—not to create unnaturally light or "bleached" skin. Me Clinic's Responsible Cosmetic Medicine™ approach prioritizes gradual, natural improvement over aggressive treatment that could create irregular lightening or damage skin.

You should expect your skin to return to a more even version of your natural tone, not to become dramatically lighter than your baseline. Proper treatment creates smooth, even coloration that looks like healthy skin, not "treated" skin.

**Am I too young/old for treatment?**

There's no strict age limit for pigmentation treatment: - **Younger patients (late teens-20s):** Often seeking treatment for post-acne marks; excellent candidates with good healing - **Middle age (30s-50s):** Most common age group for melasma treatment; often hormonally triggered - **Mature patients (60+):** Frequently treating cumulative sun damage; results may take longer but still achievable

Factors more important than age include: - Overall skin health and healing capacity - Realistic expectations - Ability to comply with sun protection requirements - Medical conditions or medications that might affect treatment - Skin type and pigmentation depth

During consultation, we assess individual factors rather than applying arbitrary age restrictions.

**What are the risks?**

All pigmentation treatments carry some risk, particularly the risk of worsening pigmentation:

**Common risks across treatments:** - Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH): Darkening in treated areas, especially in darker skin types - Temporary redness, swelling, sensitivity: Usually resolves within days to weeks - Uneven lightening: Patches may fade at different rates - Incomplete improvement: Some pigmentation may not fully clear

**Treatment-specific risks:** - **Laser/IPL:** Burns if settings inappropriate for skin type, hypopigmentation (permanent lightening), scarring (rare) - **Chemical peels:** Over-exfoliation, prolonged redness, infection if skin barrier compromised - **Prescription topicals:** Irritation, dryness, photosensitivity, ochronosis (paradoxical darkening with long-term hydroquinone)

**Risk mitigation at Me Clinic:** - Conservative settings initially, increased gradually based on response - Patch testing for new treatments or uncertain skin reactions - Detailed post-treatment protocols to support healing - Immediate access to practitioners if adverse reactions occur - Careful patient selection—we may decline treatment if risk outweighs benefit

**Can I see before/after photos?**

Yes. During your consultation, we'll show you before/after galleries of patients with similar pigmentation patterns and skin types to yours. This helps set realistic expectations about achievable results.

It's important to view results from patients with similar skin types (Fitzpatrick scale) and pigmentation types (melasma vs sun damage vs post-inflammatory) as outcomes vary significantly based on these factors.

**How do I prepare for treatment?**

Preparation varies by treatment but generally includes:

**\*\*2-4 weeks before any treatment:\*\*** - Start prescribed skincare regime (often includes low-dose hydroquinone, gentle retinoid, antioxidant serum) - Stop any irritating products or harsh exfoliants - Avoid excessive sun exposure and use SPF 50+ daily - Discontinue self-tanning products

**\*\*1 week before:\*\*** - Avoid blood-thinning medications if medically safe (aspirin, ibuprofen, fish oil) - Avoid alcohol (can increase bruising/swelling) - Ensure no active cold sores or skin infections

**\*\*For laser/IPL specifically:\*\*** - Avoid sun exposure and tanning for 4 weeks prior - Skin must be at baseline color (no tan) - Stop photosensitizing medications if possible

**\*\*Day of treatment:\*\*** - Arrive with clean skin (no makeup, moisturizer, or sunscreen) - Bring hat and sunglasses for post-treatment sun protection - Arrange transport if you're having sedation (rare for pigmentation treatments)

Your practitioner will provide a detailed preparation checklist specific to your treatment plan.

**\*\*When will I see results?\*\***

Results timeline varies significantly by treatment:

**\*\*Prescription skincare:\*\*** - Initial improvement: 6-8 weeks - Significant improvement: 3-6 months - Optimal results: 6-12 months of consistent use

**\*\*Chemical peels:\*\*** - Immediate temporary glow after light peels - Noticeable lightening: 2-4 weeks post-peel - Cumulative improvement: Over series of 4-6 peels

**\*\*Laser therapy (Picosecond/Q-switched):\*\*** - Initial changes: 1-2 weeks (may temporarily darken first) - Progressive lightening: After each session, 2-3 weeks apart - Optimal results: 2-3 months after completing full series

**\*\*IPL therapy:\*\*** - Spots darken dramatically: Days 1-7 - Spots shed: Days 7-14 - Clear improvement visible: 2-3 weeks post-treatment - Best results: After full series of 3-5 sessions

**\*\*Microneedling:\*\*** - Subtle gradual improvement: 4-6 weeks after each session - Cumulative results: Over 4-6 session series - Final assessment: 2-3 months after last session

**\*\*Important expectation:\*\*** Pigmentation improvement is gradual, not instant. Patients seeking immediate dramatic change may be disappointed. The most successful outcomes occur in patients committed to a 3-6 month treatment journey with realistic milestones.

**\*\*Can melasma come back after treatment?\*\***

Yes, melasma is a chronic condition and recurrence is common. Studies show: - 50-70% of melasma cases recur within 6-12 months without maintenance - Triggers include sun exposure, hormonal changes, heat exposure - Recurrence doesn't mean treatment failed—it reflects the chronic nature of melasma

**\*\*Minimizing recurrence:\*\*** - Daily SPF 50+ sunscreen (mineral-based preferred) - Sun avoidance during peak hours - Continuation of medical-grade skincare (can often reduce strength after improvement) - Quarterly maintenance peels or annual laser touch-ups - Address hormonal triggers where possible - Avoid heat exposure (saunas, hot yoga)

Many Me Clinic patients transition to a maintenance protocol after initial improvement: daily preventive skincare plus periodic professional treatments (e.g., light peel every 3 months).

**\*\*What's the difference between melasma and sun spots?\*\***

While both are forms of hyperpigmentation, they differ in cause, pattern, and treatment response:

**\*\*Melasma:\*\*** - Cause: Hormonal triggers (pregnancy, contraceptives) + sun exposure - Pattern: Larger patches, often symmetrical on both cheeks, forehead, upper lip - Color: Brown to grey-brown - Depth: Can be epidermal (surface), dermal (deep), or mixed - Behavior: Waxes and wanes, chronic, recurrence-prone - Treatment: More challenging; requires ongoing management

**\*\*Sun Spots (Solar Lentigines):\*\*** - Cause: Cumulative UV damage over years - Pattern: Discrete spots, irregular borders, randomly distributed - Color: Light to dark brown - Depth: Typically epidermal (surface) - Behavior: Stable, doesn't fluctuate - Treatment: Generally responds well; can be permanent result with sun protection

During your consultation, Wood's lamp examination helps determine your pigmentation type and depth, which guides treatment selection.

**\*\*Is treatment safe during pregnancy or breastfeeding?\*\***

Most pigmentation treatments are **\*\*not recommended\*\*** during pregnancy or breastfeeding:

**\*\*Not safe during pregnancy/breastfeeding:\*\*** - Prescription hydroquinone - Retinoids (oral or topical) - Chemical peels - Laser treatments - IPL therapy

**\*\*Generally safe:\*\*** - Mineral sunscreen (zinc oxide, titanium dioxide) - Vitamin C serums - Azelaic acid (topical) - Gentle antioxidants

**\*\*The reality:\*\*** Many patients develop melasma during pregnancy (chloasma/"mask of pregnancy"), but treatment must wait until after pregnancy and breastfeeding conclude. The good news is pregnancy-related melasma often improves spontaneously after delivery, though it may not completely resolve.

We recommend waiting 3-6 months after breastfeeding ends before beginning active treatment, allowing hormones to stabilize.

### ## Real Patient Results

At Me Clinic, we've treated thousands of patients with various types of hyperpigmentation including stubborn melasma, post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, and extensive sun damage. While individual results vary significantly based on pigmentation type, depth, skin type, and patient compliance with post-treatment care, our before/after gallery demonstrates the range of outcomes achievable with our evidence-based treatment protocols.

Realistic expectations are crucial: most patients see 50-80% improvement rather than 100% clearance, particularly with melasma. The most successful outcomes occur in patients who commit to the full treatment protocol including home skincare, understand the chronic nature of some pigmentation types, and maintain rigorous sun protection long-term.

During your consultation, your practitioner will show you cases similar to yours—matching skin type, pigmentation pattern, and treatment modality—and discuss what's realistically achievable for your specific situation.

### ## Book Your Free Consultation

Ready to explore your hyperpigmentation treatment options?

**\*\*Three ways to book:\*\*** 1. **\*\*Call:\*\*** (03) 8823 5859 2. **\*\*Online:\*\*** Book via Me Clinic website consultation page 3. **\*\*Email:\*\*** info@meclinic.com.au

**\*\*What to bring to your consultation:\*\*** - List of current medications and supplements (some affect pigmentation or treatment safety) - Medical history including hormonal medications (contraceptives, HRT) - Photos showing your pigmentation at its worst (if it fluctuates) - List of previous treatments attempted and their results - Questions for your practitioner

**\*\*Your consultation includes:\*\*** ✓ Comprehensive skin analysis with Wood's lamp examination ✓ Discussion of triggers and contributing factors ✓ Customized treatment recommendations based on your pigmentation type ✓ Transparent pricing for recommended protocol ✓ Before/after gallery review of similar cases ✓ Realistic timeline and expectations ✓ No obligation to proceed

**\*\*Me Clinic Location:\*\*** 4 Burke Road, Malvern East VIC 3145 Convenient parking available Easily accessible from Melbourne CBD and surrounding suburbs

---

**\*\*Important Note:\*\*** Successful pigmentation treatment requires partnership between practitioner and patient. Your commitment to daily sun protection, consistent home skincare, and realistic expectations is just as important as the in-clinic treatments we provide. At Me Clinic, we'll guide you through every step of your pigmentation journey with evidence-based protocols and honest communication about what's achievable for your specific situation.