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Treating Age Spots in Highland and New Paltz

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Age Spots on Sun-Exposed Skin

Solar lentigines, or age spots, are characterized by the appearance of black, brown or tan spots that

show up on the face, the backs of the hands, on the chest, and in other areas of the skin that are frequently exposed to the sun. People that have fair complexions or that have a history of intense sun exposure tend to get them more than dark skinned individuals or those that limit their exposure to the sun.

Sun spots can range in size from as small as a freckle to over 13 millimeters across. Solar lentigines can appear as isolated marks or can group together in clusters, which makes them appear more prominent. Age spots are quite common in adults over the age of 50. However, they can also be found on young people that spend a lot of time exposed to direct sunlight.

In terms of health, true age spots are harmless, but unsightly. However, it is always best to allow one's doctor determine whether the spots are age spots or some more serious condition, especially when one notices changes occurring. One should always ask a doctor if a sun spot appears to be rapidly increasing in size, is very darkly pigmented, has a border that is asymmetrical, is accompanied by bleeding, tenderness, redness or itching or that has an unusual combination of colors.

Sometimes, people mistake other skin conditions for age spots. For instance, certain types of moles can appear as similar looking small, dark brown skin spots that vary in size and color. Moles can be either raised or flat and can develop in close proximity to actual age spots. A type of skin cancer known as lentigo maligna can also develop in areas of the skin that have had long-term sun exposure, as can seborrheic keratosis, another skin condition that causes unsightly growths.

Age spots can be lightened with a wide array of skin-bleaching products or more effectively removed through Intense Pulsed Light treatments like the M22 available at Essence Medispa in Highland, NY. However, the best course of action is to prevent them from occurring altogether. Avoiding the sun whenever possible, and using a potent sunscreen are the best ways to maintain the youthful appearance of the skin and to avoid age spots.

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