

# A Brown Mask on Your Face? It's Not Halloween Yet. You May Have Melasma.

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Melasma, also known as chloasma or mask of pregnancy, is a dark discoloration found on sun-exposed areas of the face. Melasma is a very common skin disorder; it usually affects women but occasionally is seen in men who use after-shave lotions, scented soaps and other toiletries.

Melasma is more pronounced during and after the summer months as a result of sun exposure. It is also called the mask of pregnancy since it is observed during pregnancy and breast feeding. Repeated pregnancies can intensify the pigmentation. It can occur as a side effect of taking contraceptive pills and injected contraceptive preparations. It is also common in postmenopausal women taking hormonal replacement.

Sun exposure, following the use of soaps, scented toiletries and various cosmetics, can also produce this mottled pigmentation, and it is due to ultraviolet radiation being absorbed by the chemical substance (perfume, cologne)

on the skin. This pigmentation can extend down to the neck where perfumes are more commonly applied.

## Treating Melasma

Melasma is a disorder that brings a great cosmetic concern. The good news is it can be cured. Your dermatologist can diagnose Melasma based upon the appearance of your skin and a closer examination with a Wood's lamp.

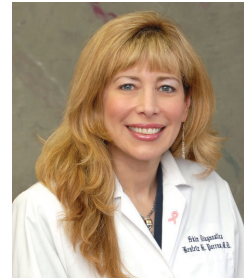
Here are a few important recommendations if you think you may have melasma. If you are on hormonal contraception, consider stopping this. Sun protection is very important; use a sun block containing Zinc Oxide or Titanium Dioxide. Avoid strong soaps or abrasive cleaners. Do not apply your perfume on the neck; apply it on the wrists. Visit your dermatologist; he or she will tailor a treatment for you.

Medical treatments include prescription bleaching creams containing hydroquinone and tretinoin. My favorite is Triluma®. There are other preparations containing Azelaic acid, Glycolic acid, Lactic acid and Kojic acid.

Laser Genesis combined with microdermabrasion and Laser Resurfacing are very effective treatments when combined with medical treatments and daily sun block use.

Some medical grade skin products can also help. Dermamed a line of medical grade skin products offers a skin care kit that contains the complete daily routine for patients with melasma, including cleanser, moisturizer, sun block and bleaching serum.

So, do not wear your brown mask. It's not Halloween yet!



*Skin Diagnostics Laser and Rejuvenation offers Medical Grade products and laser treatments to cure Melasma. Call us for an appointment at 513-631-0059.*

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