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Abstract

Red Light Phototherapy Alone Is Effective for Acne Vulgaris: Randomized, Single-Blinded Clinical Trial

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Jung Im Na, MD, and Dae Hun Suh, MD, PhD, have indicated no significant interest with commercial supporters.

Abstract

BACKGROUND Recently, a demand for safe and effective treatment of acne has been increasing.

Although visible light has attracted attention as a new option, the effect of red light alone has not yet been evaluated.

OBJECTIVES The objective was to assess the efficacy of red light phototherapy with a portable device in acne vulgaris.

METHODS Twenty-eight volunteers with mild to moderate acne were treated with portable red light-emitting devices in this split-face randomized trial. The right or left side of the face was randomized to treatment side and phototherapy was performed for 15 minutes twice a day for 8 weeks. Clinical photographs, lesion counts, and a visual analog scale (VAS) were used to assess each side of the face at baseline and Weeks 1, 2, 4, and 8, and a split-face comparison was performed.

RESULTS The percent improvement in noninflammatory and inflammatory lesion counts of the treated side was significant compared to the control side ($p < .005$). VAS decreased from 3.9 to 1.9 on the treatment side and the difference between the treatment and control sides was significant at Week 8 ($p < .005$).

CONCLUSIONS This study shows that red light phototherapy alone can be a new therapeutic option for acne vulgaris.