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AESTHETIC & COSMETIC SYMPOSIUM (ACOS) 2025

Following the success of the Aesthetic & Cosmetic Symposium (ACOS) in 2024, the USMARI Research & Innovation Centre, in collaboration with the International Medical Aesthetic Conference & Exhibition (IMACE) and Esthetic Medical Solutions (EMS), is delighted to present the 3rd ACOS 2025. This year's symposium, themed "*Science-Driven Aesthetics: Redefining Beauty with Evidence,*" reflects our commitment to advancing a more innovative, ethical, and evidence-based aesthetic medicine and cosmetic industry. The symposium focuses on promoting cutting-edge advancements, prioritising safety and scientifically validated practices, and offering deep insights into the latest treatments and technologies.

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It is with great pleasure and honour that I welcome all of you to the 3rd Aesthetic & Cosmetic Symposium (ACOS) 2025, held in conjunction with the 4th International Medical Aesthetic Conference and Exhibition (IMACE), proudly organised by the USMARI Research & Innovation Centre in collaboration with Esthetic Medical Solutions (EMS). This year's theme, "Science-Driven Aesthetics: Redefining Beauty with Evidence" reflects our commitment to shaping a more innovative, ethical, and evidence-based aesthetic medicine and cosmetic industry.

Over the past few years, the aesthetic medicine and cosmetic industry landscape has undergone significant transformation, driven by cutting-edge technologies, scientific research advancements, and an increasing emphasis on safety and evidence-based practise. ACOS 2025 aims to build upon this momentum by providing a dynamic platform for collaboration, education, and the exchange of ideas among practitioners, researchers, academicians, and industry leaders. Through this symposium, we seek to foster meaningful discussions on the latest advancements, regulatory frameworks, and future directions of aesthetic medicine and the cosmetic industry. More importantly, ACOS 2025 continues to champion the integration of evidence-based practises, ensuring that every innovation aligns with ethical standards and prioritises patient and consumer well-being.

We are deeply honoured to host a distinguished line-up of speakers, each contributing invaluable perspectives and expertise. I encourage every participant to actively engage, share insights, and build networks that extend beyond this symposium. It is through open dialogue and collaboration that we continue to strengthen the credibility and growth of this field. On behalf of the organising committee, I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our partners and supporters, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), Tourism Malaysia, our esteemed sponsors, speakers, exhibitors, and the entire USMARI team, whose dedication and collaboration have made this event possible.

As we embark on this journey of learning and discovery, let us embrace the opportunity to innovate, to inspire, and to uplift one another. Together, we are not only shaping the future of the aesthetic medicine and cosmetic industry but also ensuring that it thrives upon the pillars of integrity, knowledge, and excellence. Once again, welcome to ACOS 2025. May this symposium be an inspiring experience for all, as we continue advancing the frontiers of aesthetics where science meets beauty, and innovation meets purpose.

Science-Driven Aesthetics: Redefining Beauty with Evidence

Yours sincerely,

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ungku Mohd Shahrin Mohd Zaman, MD
Organising Chairman of ACOS 2025

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USMARI Research & Innovation Centre

ACOS25-P-001: Combination Therapy Using Q-Switched Nd:YAG Laser and Oral Tranexamic Acid for Melasma Treatment

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Melasma is a chronic, relapsing hyperpigmentation disorder with significant psychosocial impact, particularly in individuals with darker skin types. Low-fluence Q-switched Nd:YAG laser (LFQSNY) is a widely used treatment option. The adjunctive use of oral tranexamic acid (TA) has been proposed to improve outcomes. This is a case of 49-year-old Chinese woman (Fitzpatrick skin type IV) with a 10-year history of centrofacial melasma. Treatment commenced with LFQSNY (Spectra XT™, 1064 nm, 8 mm spot size, 10 Hz, fluence 0.55–0.90 J/cm², three passes per session) with a total of 18 sessions. Oral TA 250 mg OD was initiated after the eighth session due to suboptimal response and a flare following sun exposure. Clinical improvement was assessed using the modified Melasma Area and Severity Index (mMASI). At baseline, the mMASI score was 13.8. The score increased to 15.3 by the eighth session after patient had a sunburnt. Following the introduction of oral TA, progressive reduction was observed, reaching 8.7 at session 15 and 5.8 at session 18. No adverse events were reported during or after six months of TA therapy. The combination regimen demonstrated enhanced and sustained improvement compared with LFQSNY monotherapy. This case highlights the potential benefit of combining LFQSNY with oral TA for chronic melasma, achieving significant improvement. Further randomized controlled trials are warranted to validate the efficacy and safety of this multimodal approach across different melasma subtypes and patient populations.

Keywords: Melasma, Q-switched Nd:YAG laser, Tranexamic acid, Combination treatment, Hyperpigmentation

ACOS25-P-002: Photonics and Advanced MOF-Nanomaterial for Potential Non-invasive Skin and Tissue Therapies

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Photonics integrated with advanced nanomaterials offers new opportunities for non-invasive biomedical therapies. The Q-switched laser technique, well known for its role in skin and tissue treatments such as tattoo removal, scar revision, and dermatological resurfacing, delivers high-peak-power, short-duration pulses with minimal thermal damage to surrounding tissue. Building on this principle, we demonstrate Q-switched operation in a Praseodymium-doped ZBLAN fiber (PDFF) laser within the O-band by employing a thin-film saturable absorber (SA) based on the metal-organic framework ZIF-67 (zeolitic imidazolate framework). Owing to its porous architecture, high surface area, and favorable nonlinear optical response, ZIF-67 provides efficient light-matter interaction that enables stable Q-switching. When integrated into a ring-shaped cavity, the ZIF-67 thin film produced pulses at 1303.06 nm, with the repetition rate increasing from 75.37 to 84.68 kHz and the pulse duration narrowing from 3.65 to 3.37 μ s as the pump power rose from 960.7 to 975.1 mW. A maximum pulse energy of 32.71 nJ and output power of 2.77 mW were achieved. These preliminary results highlight the potential of ZIF-67 thin films as effective nonlinear optical materials for compact, wavelength-flexible Q-switched lasers, opening pathways for both biomedical photonics and next-generation non-invasive therapeutic technologies.

Keywords: Photonics, Advanced nanomaterial, Q-switched, ZIF-67, Non-invasive technology.

ACOS25-P-003: Treatment of Acquired Bilateral Nevus of Ota-like Macules with Concomitant Dermal Melasma Using Q-Switched Nd:YAG Laser: A Case Report

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The concurrent presence of melasma and acquired bilateral nevus of Ota-like macules (ABNOM) presents unique challenges in dermatological treatment, as both conditions involve pigmented lesions but require distinct approaches. This case report discusses the treatment of a patient with ABNOM and concomitant dermal melasma using the 1064-nm Q-switched Nd:YAG laser (QSNYL). We report a 50-year-old female patient with Fitzpatrick type IV presented at our clinic with both ABNOM and dermal melasma. She was treated with 1064-nm QSNYL for 20 sessions over 21 months, with treatment intervals ranging from 4 to 6 weeks. The outcome showed significant improvement in both ABNOM and melasma, as evidenced by the clearance of ABNOM lesions and a reduction in the modified Melasma Area and Severity Index (mMASI) score, which decreased from 21.60 at the initial consultation to 6.40 over 21 months. In conclusion, our findings suggest the potential efficacy of 1064-nm QSNYL in treating patients with both ABNOM and dermal melasma in a Malaysian population. Further studies are needed to determine the efficacy and safety of 1064-nm QSNYL in treating larger cohorts of patients with ABNOM and concurrent melasma.

Keywords: Acquired bilateral nevus of Ota-like Macules, Melasma, Q-switched Nd:YAG laser

ACOS25-P-004: Minimally Invasive Blood-Based Therapy for Cartilage Regeneration: A Novel Scaffold-Free Approach using Peripheral Blood-Derived Mesenchymal Stromal Cells and Platelet-Rich Plasma

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Articular cartilage defects affect millions globally, with 50% progressing to post-traumatic osteoarthritis within 20 years. Current treatments require invasive bone marrow or adipose tissue harvesting, increasing patient morbidity and costs. Peripheral blood-derived mesenchymal stromal cells (PB-MSCs) offer a minimally invasive alternative through simple blood collection yet remain underexplored. This study investigates the synergistic potential of PB-MSCs combined with platelet-rich plasma (PRP) for hyaline cartilage regeneration in a scaffold-free approach, advancing accessible regenerative medicine. New Zealand White rabbits (N=30) with bilateral full-thickness cartilage defects (4mm diameter) were randomized into five groups: PB-MSC alone, PRP alone, PB-MSC+PRP combination, defect control, and normal control. PB-MSCs were validated through immunophenotyping and tri-lineage differentiation against bone marrow-MSCs and adipose tissue-MSCs. PRP was prepared, achieving 5-fold platelet concentration. Intra-articular injections (1×10^6 cells) were administered weekly for three weeks. Outcomes were assessed at 3 and 6 months using Modified Brittberg and Modified O'Driscoll histological scoring (H&E, Safranin-O, type II collagen immunohistochemistry) and quantitative morphometric analyses by four blinded observers. PB-MSCs demonstrated positive MSC characteristics with high CD90 expression (>99%) and successful tri-lineage differentiation, validating their therapeutic potential. Combinatorial PB-MSC+PRP treatment achieved superior cartilage regeneration with progressive improvement from 3 to 6 months. At 6 months, the combination therapy achieved Modified O'Driscoll scores of 21.00 ± 1.36 compared to defect controls (8.00 ± 1.00 , $p < 0.0001$), significantly outperforming individual PB-MSC (19.00 ± 0.88) and PRP (13.00 ± 1.26) therapies. Histological analyses confirmed hyaline-like cartilage formation with positive type II collagen expression and proteoglycan deposition, demonstrating near-complete defect filling. This scaffold-free, blood-based approach represents a significant advancement in orthopedic regenerative medicine, offering accessible, cost-effective treatment through minimally invasive procedures. The validated synergistic efficacy establishes immediate clinical translation potential, addressing global healthcare challenges particularly in resource-limited settings.

Keywords: Peripheral blood mesenchymal stromal cells, Platelet-rich plasma, Cartilage regeneration, Scaffold-free therapy, Minimally invasive

ACOS25-P-005: Efficacy of Combination Therapy for Melasma Using Low Fluence Q-Switched Nd:YAG Laser, Pulsed Dye Laser, High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound, and Polynucleotides: A Case Report

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Melasma is a chronic hyperpigmentation disorder with complex pathogenesis, making it difficult to treat effectively with a single modality. Conventional therapies often show limited efficacy and frequent recurrences, highlighting the need for multi-targeted treatment strategies. This case describes a 41-year-old woman with Fitzpatrick skin type III and a seven-year history of malar melasma with telangiectatic erythema, who was successfully treated with a multimodal combination therapy. Over a four-month period, she received five sessions of low-fluence Q-switched Nd:YAG laser (LFQSNYL) with pulsed dye laser (PDL), two sessions of high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU), and three sessions of polynucleotide (PN) injections. Treatment efficacy was assessed using the modified Melasma Area and Severity Index (mMASI) in conjunction with patient-reported satisfaction. The patient's mMASI score decreased from 13.2 to 3.3, with visible improvement in both pigmentation and vascular erythema. The patient reported high satisfaction with the results, and no recurrence was noted at three-month follow-up. This case highlights the synergistic benefit of addressing melanin deposition, vascular proliferation, and photoaging simultaneously through combination therapy. By targeting multiple pathogenic pathways, this approach may provide more effective and sustained outcomes. While promising, further clinical studies with larger sample sizes and long-term follow-up are required to validate efficacy and optimize treatment protocols.

Keywords: High-intensity focused ultrasound, Low fluence Q-switched Nd:YAG laser, Melasma, Pulsed dye laser, Polynucleotides.

ACOS25-P-006: Evaluating the Efficacy of 1064 nm Q-Switched Nd:YAG Laser in Q-PTP Mode for Treating Concurrent Nevus of Ota and Melasma: A Case Report

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Nevus of Ota and melasma are dermal hyperpigmentation disorders that often pose therapeutic challenges due to their diverse etiologies and variable responses to treatment. This case report presents a 44-year-old Chinese woman with Fitzpatrick skin type IV, diagnosed with concurrent Nevus of Ota and melasma, who had pigmentation on the left side of her face and forehead since childhood. She had previously undergone non-ablative laser therapy and topical treatments, but no improvement seen. The patient subsequently received ten treatment sessions using a 1064 nm Q-switched Nd:YAG laser (QSNYL) in Quickly-pulse-to-pulse (Q-PTP) mode over one year, with 1–2-month intervals between sessions. For Nevus of Ota, laser settings included fluence 4.0–5.2 J/cm², 4 mm spot size, and 5 Hz pulse rate with a single pass. For melasma, settings included fluence 0.7–0.8 J/cm², 8 mm spot size, and 10 Hz pulse rate with three passes. Following treatment, the patient's Melasma Area and Severity Index (MASI) score improved from 5.2 to 2.6. Clinical evaluation showed Grade II (26–50%) improvement in Nevus of Ota and moderate improvement in melasma, with enhanced skin tone and patient satisfaction. No major adverse effects were reported. These findings suggest that the 1064 nm QSNYL in Q-PTP mode may serve as a promising therapeutic option for patients with concurrent Nevus of Ota and melasma, particularly in Asian populations. Further studies with large scale studies are needed to validate its long-term efficacy and safety.

Keywords: Nevus of Ota, Melasma, Q-switched Nd:YAG laser, Q-PTP mode, Hyperpigmentation

ACOS25-P-007: Mastectomy Consideration Following Recurrent Breast Abscesses After Filler Injection: A Case Report

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Breast augmentation procedures have evolved significantly, shifting from invasive to minimally invasive approaches. Injectable fillers are among the preferred options due to their less invasive nature; however, their safety and legality remain controversial and vary by region. In Malaysia, the use of breast fillers has increased, yet the true incidence and complications are underreported due to inadequate regulation. This case involves a 50-year-old woman who developed recurrent breast abscesses in 2020 following a filler injection performed by an uncredentialed beautician. Despite multiple incision and drainage procedures and prolonged antibiotic therapy, she continued to experience abscess recurrence with significant breast tissue distortion. Culture results revealed *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and MRSA infections, leading to prolonged hospitalization and discussions regarding bilateral mastectomy. Conservative management was continued after multidisciplinary evaluation. Serial MRI follow-up up to October 2024 demonstrated persistent injection granulomas and post-surgical fibrosis without new abscess formation. This case underscores the severe and long-term complications that can result from unregulated breast filler use, emphasizing the importance of patient education, strict procedural regulation, and multidisciplinary management in preventing morbidity and unnecessary surgical interventions such as mastectomy.

Keywords: Breast abscess, Injectable fillers, Cosmetic procedures, Infection, Mastectomy

ACOS25-P-008: The Effect of Earlobe Acupuncture on Fitness 12-Minute Running Test for Students of the Faculty of Medicine, Indonesian Defence University

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Physical fitness is important for maintaining physical health, increasing concentration, endurance, and productivity. Students who have a good level of physical fitness are more physically prepared to participate in learning activities that require high concentration and stamina to participate in academic learning activities and non-academic extracurricular activities. Increasing evidence shows that acupuncture has a good effect on physical exercise endurance. This study assessed the effectiveness of auricle acupuncture compared to sham auricle acupuncture on physical exercise fitness, especially in semi-military communities. The design of this study was a single randomized controlled clinical trial. The study was conducted at the TNI Hambalang PMPP Field from September to November 2024. There were 2 study groups, the auricle presses needle acupuncture group compared to the sham group. The intervention group was given press needles at the ear points MA-TF1 Shenmen, MA-IC4 Heart and MA-IC4 Sympatetic 30 minutes before starting the running session, using a 0.22 mm x 15 mm press needle. Press needle, pressed for 1 minute at the beginning, removed 15 minutes after running. The sham group received the same treatment with non-needle plaster. Data collection was carried out 2 times, for pretest data and the second treatment as posttest data. Outcome assessments were carried out at 5-, 10-, and 15-minutes post run. Press needle acupuncture therapy resulted in significant improvement in physical fitness ($p < 0.05$) in male VO₂max prediction parameters, intensity and HRpeak, as well as decreased systolic, diastolic, and pulse blood pressure at the fifth minute, decreased effort borg score at the fifth and 10th minutes. No significant results were obtained in the leg fatigue score ($p > 0.05$). Press needle acupuncture therapy significantly improved physical fitness ($p < 0.05$) compared to the sham group.

Keywords: Earlobe acupuncture, press needle acupuncture, physical fitness, endurance, sports acupuncture, 12-minute running test.

ACOS25-P-009: Exploring Factors Influencing Consumers to Undergo Aesthetic Medical Treatments in Malaysia: A Cross-Sectional Study

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This study investigated factors influencing consumers to undergo aesthetic medical treatments in Malaysia. A self-administered survey was distributed via Google Forms to individuals who had previously undergone aesthetic treatments. The survey comprised three sections: sociodemographic data, influencing factors (personal desires, physical concerns, psychosocial influences, social media, external influences, and life events), and clinic selection criteria. A total of 90 respondents participated, mostly aged 30–39 years (52.2%), female (85.6%) and married (55.6%). Respondents primarily underwent aesthetic treatments to fulfill personal desires and enhance physical appearance, such as achieving smoother skin (95.6%), maintaining beauty with age (90.0%), becoming more beautiful (88.9%), and addressing skin issues (85.6%). Psychosocial motivations were also notable, including improving appearance (90.0%), boosting confidence (88.9%), and enhancing self-esteem (84.4%). Social media, external influences, and significant life events had minimal impact on treatment decisions. When selecting a clinic, respondents prioritized safety, good reputation, experienced and LCP-certified doctors, and recommendations from trusted healthcare professionals. Personal desires and psychosocial motivations were the primary drivers influencing Malaysians to undergo aesthetic medical treatments. Safety, credibility, and practitioner expertise were key considerations in clinic selection, emphasizing the importance of patient-centered communication and qualified practitioners in promoting safe aesthetic practices.

Keywords: Consumers, Aesthetic treatments, Malaysia