

Intense Pulsed Light Therapy vs. Broadband Light Therapy: What's the Difference?

Overview

We all want to have perfect skin, one that's free from wrinkles, remains pumped and volumized as we age, and is youthful despite the effects of aging. Two popular forms of cosmetic treatment are available to help—intense pulsed light therapy and broadband light therapy.

But, what are the differences between the two? Both treatments use light to target skin imperfections, but they work differently and provide different results.

Read on to discover the differences between IPL and BBL and help you decide which treatment is right for you.



What is Intense Pulsed Light Therapy?

Intense Pulsed Light Therapy or IPL is a type of light therapy that uses short bursts of high-intensity light to target specific areas of the skin. It may sometimes also be referred to as a photofacial. The light targets the pigment in the skin, which helps break up melanin and other pigments.

IPL is used as a cosmetic procedure to:

- Improve the appearance of sun damage
- Reduce Age spots
- Diminish freckles
- Target other pigmentation issues

What is Broadband Light Therapy?

Broadband Light therapy or BBL is a type of light therapy that uses broadband light to target the whole face. The light targets both the surface and deeper layers of the skin.

BBL therapy is used by board-certified plastic surgeons or medical aestheticians to:

- Improve the appearance of sun damage
- Reduce wrinkles
- Target other signs of aging

What are the Differences Between Intense Pulsed Light Therapy and Broadband Light Therapy?

Both IPL and BBL treatments can provide several benefits, including improved skin tone and texture, reduced fine lines and wrinkles, and a more youthful appearance. But, these treatments, though similar, differ in a couple of important ways:

1. Targeted vs. Entire Area

The main difference is the area of target. IPL is used to treat specific areas on the skin, while BBL targets your entire face.

2. Type of Light Used

The second difference is the type of light that's used during your treatment. IPL makes use of high-intensity light to break up pigments, while BBL therapy makes use of broadband light. This is much more effective in stimulating collagen production by targeting the deeper layers of your skin.

3. Number of Treatment Sessions

Since IPL doesn't go as deep, most patients require multiple sessions in order to see lasting results on their faces. BBL, however, targets both superficial and deep skin layers—only one or two sessions are required before a patient can see a change in their appearance.

Is IPL Or BBL Therapy Right for You?

The best way to decide whether IPL or BBL is right for you is to schedule a consult with a board-certified dermatologist or plastic surgeon who can assess your individual needs and recommend the best treatment.

If you have specific areas of concern, such as sun damage or age spots, IPL may be the best option for you. But, if you're looking for a more all-over treatment to improve the appearance of your skin, BBL may be the better choice.

The cost of IPL and BBL treatments varies depending on the number of sessions you need, the size of the area being treated, and the provider you choose. Typically, IPL treatments range from \$250 to \$500 per session, while BBL treatments range from \$300 to \$700 per session.

Light Therapy Treatments are Safe When Performed by a Board-Certified Plastic Surgeon

IPL and BBL treatments are generally safe for all skin types. However, some people may experience temporary side effects, such as:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Bruising

The best way to determine which treatment is right for you is to consult with a board-certified plastic surgeon or dermatologist specializing in non-invasive cosmetic procedures. He or she will be able to make the appropriate recommendations based on your unique needs and skin type.