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LIGHT BRIGADE

If you have a mild case of rosacea (or a low threshold for pain), there are alternatives to the Vbeam laser.

Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) IPL machines emit a range of light frequencies (as opposed to a laser's single wavelength). The beauty of this broad-range approach is that it eliminates redness as well as brown spots. According to Manhattan dermatologist Doris J. Day, MD, IPL can also stimulate collagen production, minimizing fine wrinkles over time. The treatment is practically painless, and there's little downtime. (\$400 and up per session; minimum of three to see results)

Light plus Levulan To banish the pimply bumps that can pop up with rosacea, some dermatologists recommend light therapy in tandem with Levulan, a topical agent approved for acne. The

solution targets the oil glands when activated by a light source—the stronger the better, says Kenneth Beer, MD, a dermatologist in Palm Beach. "If you're going through the expense and effort of using Levulan, I'd use an intense light—laser or IPL." (\$350 to \$650 per session; approximately three required for results)

Light-Emitting Diodes (LEDs) The same technology used by NASA to speed wound-healing can now be found at spas and skin-care counters (I tested the Osmotics version at my local Nordstrom). Blue LEDs have been found to kill pustule-causing bacteria, while those in the red spectrum have anti-inflammatory benefits. Look for affordable at-home LED options to become more widely available in the next year. (Approximately \$75 per session; minimum of six to see results)—C.M.