

CASE 40-3

A 30-year-old patient presents to the emergency department with a rash following an intense pulsed light (IPL) treatment.



What is the most likely cause for this rash?

- (A) Intense pulsed light (IPL) treatment of tanned skin
- (B) Use of the wrong laser wavelength or IPL filter
- (C) Pulse duration too long
- (D) Photosensitivity reaction
- (E) The use of sunscreen lotion prior to therapy.

The correct answer is (A), intense pulsed light (IPL) treatment of tanned skin.

Never treat tanned skin with a laser or IPL! The increased epidermal pigment will preferentially absorb the light and often induces a blistering reaction. This will manifest itself as rectangular zones of pigment loss in contrast to the surrounding areas of untreated tanned skin. This unsightly complication will last for months, but should gradually improve unless scarring has occurred.

The other choices would not cause this pattern.