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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-56817

Title: *Lifestyle Medicine for Melasma Management: A Narrative Review of Modifiable Behavioral and Environmental Factors*

Recommendation:

- Accept as it is
- ✓ Accept after minor revision.....**
- Accept after major revision
- Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Name: Dr S. K. Nath

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Strengths of the Study

- The manuscript addresses an often underexplored aspect of melasma management by focusing on modifiable behavioral and environmental factors through a comprehensive lifestyle medicine framework.
- It presents an innovative, integrated approach—the Melasma Lifestyle Modification (MLM) Framework—which can be valuable in clinical decision-making.
- The review synthesizes a wide range of recent literature across multiple domains such as photoprotection, nutrition, stress, sleep, and environmental exposures, making it relevant and timely.
- The methodology includes a thorough search of multiple reputable databases, with clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, enhancing the reliability of the evidence synthesis.
- The discussion highlights practical clinical applications, encouraging a holistic management approach that complements pharmacological treatments.
- The paper emphasizes the need for future research, including prospective interventional studies, thus contributing to the field's development.

Weaknesses of the Study

- The review is narrative rather than systematic, which may introduce bias and limits the strength of the evidence synthesis.
- Much of the evidence for key lifestyle factors, such as gut microbiome and psychological stress, rests on limited or observational studies, reducing definitive conclusions.
- The overall quality and level of evidence across domains are variable, with some being based on mechanistic hypotheses or small sample studies.
- No meta-analyses or quantitative assessment of effect sizes is provided, limiting the ability to gauge the magnitude of impact.
- The paper occasionally presents lengthy, complex sentences that could hinder clarity.
- Ethical considerations, such as approval for any included studies or informed consent procedures, are not explicitly addressed.

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- Figures and tables are referenced but not provided in the uploaded excerpt, which hampers comprehensive evaluation of their clarity and usefulness.
- There are minor typographical and grammatical issues that could benefit from editorial review.

Reviewer Comments

- **Title and Abstract:** The title accurately reflects the content and focus of the review. The abstract clearly summarizes the background, aims, methods, key findings, and conclusion, although it could benefit from more specific mention of the evidence strength in each domain.
- **Introduction and Objectives:** The introduction effectively contextualizes the significance of melasma and the rationale for exploring lifestyle factors. The objectives are well-defined, focusing on synthesizing existing evidence and proposing a management framework.
- **Methodology:** The literature search strategy is robust, covering multiple databases and specifying inclusion/exclusion criteria. However, the reliance on narrative synthesis without formal systematic review or meta-analysis limits the statistical rigor.
- **Results and Discussion:** The discussion thoughtfully integrates recent findings and proposes a practical framework. Nevertheless, many of the statements are based on emerging, low-level evidence, warranting cautious interpretation.
- **Conclusion and Implications:** The conclusions are appropriate, emphasizing the potential of lifestyle modifications as adjuncts to pharmacotherapy. The call for further research is justified.
- **Ethical Clearance:** The manuscript does not specify whether ethical approval was necessary or obtained, which is understandable given it is a literature review but should be explicitly stated if applicable.
- **Language and Presentation:** The manuscript is well-written with clear language, but minor grammatical and stylistic refinements are recommended.
- **Tables and Figures:** The MLM framework is visually summarized in a figure; however, it was not included in the upload for review. Consistent formatting and clear legends are advised.
- **References:** The references are relevant and current, supporting the assertions made.