

1 **Title**

2 Intense Pulse Light combined with Low-level Light Therapy in Dry Eye Disease: A Systematic Review.

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24 **ABSTRACT**

25 **Objectives:** To evaluate the improvement in symptoms and signs associated with intense pulse light (IPL)  
26 combined with low-level light therapy (LLLT) in the treatment of dry eye disease (DED).

27 **Methods:** A systematic review of full-length original studies reporting the effects of IPL combined with  
28 LLLT for DED in two databases, PubMed and Scopus, was performed according to the PRISMA statement.  
29 The Quality Assessment Tool for case series studies from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute  
30 was used to analyse the quality of the studies selected.

31 **Results:** The search provided a total of 393 articles, of which six were included. Significant decreases in  
32 the Ocular Surface Disease Index (OSDI) score, meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD) score, MGD grade  
33 and meiboscore and increases in tear film stability, lipid layer thickness (LLT) and loss area of the  
34 meibomian gland (LAMG) have been reported. Concerning tear volume, tear meniscus height (TMH) and  
35 Schirmer's test remained unchanged. In relation to tear osmolarity (OSM) and corneal fluorescein staining  
36 (CFS), contradictory outcomes were found.

37 **Conclusions:** IPL combined with LLLT for the treatment of dry eye improves OSDI, tear film stability and  
38 meibomian gland function; thus, this treatment may be recommended for DED patients due to MGD.

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46 **KEYWORDS**

47 Intense pulse light—Low-level light therapy—Meibomian gland dysfunction—Dry eye disease.

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49 **INTRODUCTION**

50 Intense pulsed light (IPL) is a form of light therapy that that uses flash lamps to emit noncoherent,  
51 polychromatic high-intensity light of determined wavelength spectrum, ranging from 500 to 1200 nm.<sup>1,2</sup>  
52 Using these wavelengths, the potentially harmful ultraviolet radiation, which occurs below 500 nm, is  
53 filtered.<sup>3</sup> IPL applications have been used for dermatological procedures such as hair removal, pigmented  
54 lesions, acne rosacea, psoriasis and skin photo rejuvenation.<sup>1,4-8</sup> IPL is considered a safe and effective  
55 treatment option with minimal adverse effects, which may include blistering and hypopigmentation of the  
56 skin.<sup>9</sup>

57 In 2002, Toyos et al. reported that patients with dry eye disease (DED) who received IPL treatment for  
58 rosacea, acne or other skin disorders reported improvements in their dry eye symptoms.<sup>10</sup> This finding led  
59 to the development of different IPL devices to specifically treat DED. Currently, different studies have  
60 shown that IPL is a safe and effective treatment that improves the signs and symptoms of patients with  
61 evaporative dry eye (EDE) owing to meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD).<sup>10-14</sup> The main mechanism of  
62 action of IPL is thermal. IPL energy absorbed by haemoglobin and Demodex's exoskeleton, which causes  
63 thrombosis of abnormal blood vessels and necrosis of demodex,<sup>7,15,16</sup> reduces the concentration of  
64 inflammatory and microbial mediators in the eyelid and meibomian glands, thus preventing their  
65 dysfunction and improving meibum flow.<sup>17</sup>

66 Low-level light therapy (LLLT) is a treatment used for dermatological purposes and is based on the  
67 principles of photobiomodulation.<sup>18</sup> This technique involves light-emitting diodes (LEDs) at wavelengths  
68 in the visible (390 to 700 nm) and near-infrared (780 to 1100 nm) spectral range that are absorbed by  
69 chromophores localized in the skin, inducing cellular photoactivation that is suggested to repair damaged  
70 cells and improve cellular function.<sup>19,20</sup> A novel application of LLLT is the treatment of patients with DED  
71 due to MGD. Park et al.<sup>21</sup> have shown that LLLT performed on the upper and lower eyelids improves the  
72 signs and symptoms of MGD in patients with minimal adverse effects. The mechanism of action of  
73 photobiomodulation in MGD is still unclear, but it is suggested that LLLT stimulates adenosine  
74 triphosphate (ATP) production in the meibomian glands, which leads to heating and promotes meibum  
75 flow.<sup>20</sup>

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77 To date, some published studies have evaluated the efficacy of IPL combined with LLLT for DED by using  
78 the Eye-Light or Epi C-Plus device (Espansione Marketing S.p.A., Bologna, Italy), which perform these  
79 two treatments in each session.<sup>22-28</sup> However, to our knowledge, there is no systematic review exploring all  
80 the literature available on the topic of IPL combined with LLLT in the treatment of DED.

81 The objective of this systematic review is to describe the effects on symptoms and signs achieved with IPL  
82 combined consecutively with LLLT in DED in the available scientific literature.

## 83 **METHODS**

### 84 **Data sources and search strategy**

85 This systematic review was performed according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews  
86 and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA).<sup>29,30</sup> We identified 393 articles published before April 24, 2022, through the  
87 following databases: PubMed (208 studies) and Scopus (185 studies). The data search strategy with  
88 Boolean operators was as follows: (dry eye disease OR dry eye OR DED OR aqueous-deficient dry eye OR  
89 ADDE OR meibomian gland dysfunction OR MGD OR evaporative dry eye OR EDE) AND (intense pulse  
90 light OR intense pulse light therapy OR IPL OR low-level light therapy OR LLLT OR near-infrared light  
91 OR NIL OR infrared radiation). Additionally, the references of the retrieved articles were reviewed to  
92 identify other related studies if they met the inclusion criteria.

### 93 **Study selection**

94 After an initial screening, duplicate studies were removed by DistillerSR. The remaining studies underwent  
95 additional screening stages, which included title screening, abstract screening, and full-text screening.  
96 Studies unrelated to the topic were excluded from the review during title and abstract screening. Full-text  
97 studies without treatment with IPL combined with LLLT were also excluded from the review. These studies  
98 were reviewed by two investigators who selected them according to inclusion and exclusion criteria.

99 The inclusion criteria were as follows: human studies, full-length original articles and retrospective or  
100 prospective case series studies. The exclusion criteria included non-English publications, unindexed  
101 journals, and IPL treatment alone or combined with other treatments other than LLLT. There were no  
102 restrictions placed on the country in which the study was performed, the follow-up period and the sample  
103 size or results of the studies.

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## 105 **Quality assessment and data extraction**

106 The data from each study were collected and summarized independently in tables designed by two  
107 researchers. The following information was obtained from each of the articles: (1) author and date of  
108 publication (year), (2) study design, (3) mean follow-up of all patients in the whole procedure (expressed  
109 in months), (4) number of patients, (5) number of eyes involved, (6) mean age of the patients (expressed in  
110 years), (7) patients' sex (male/female), (8) type of DED, (9) light therapy treatment, and (10) light therapy  
111 device. Regarding the results of the studies, the following data were collected: (11) Ocular Surface Disease  
112 Index (OSDI), (12) Non-Invasive Break-Up Time [NIBUT, expressed in seconds (s)], (13) Break-Up Time  
113 [BUT, expressed in seconds (s)], (14) Tear Meniscus Height [TMH, expressed in millimetres (mm)], (15)  
114 Osmolarity (OSM, expressed in mOsm/L), (16) Schirmer's test [ST, expressed in millimetres (mm)], (17)  
115 Corneal Fluorescein Staining (CFS), (18) Lipid Layer thickness [LLT, expressed in nanometres (nm)], (19)  
116 MGD score (Grading scale for MGD with a score of 0-15), (20) MGD grade (Grading scale for MGD with  
117 a grade of 0 to 4, where grade 0 is normal meibum, grade 1 is turbid oil, grade 2 is turbid and viscous oil  
118 appearance, grade 3 is "ropy" meibum and grade 4 is no expression), (21) Meiboscore (Grading system for  
119 quantifying the loss of meibomian gland area with a score of 0-6), (22) Loss Area of Meibomian Gland  
120 [LAMG expressed in percentage (%)] and finally (23) authors opinion expressed by commenting in favour  
121 of light therapy treatment in DED.

122 The literature that remained after full-text screening was examined to assess the quality of the studies. To  
123 avoid the risk of bias, two dependable authors created a synopsis table (supplemental table 1) based on the  
124 Quality Assessment Tool for Case Series Studies from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.<sup>31</sup> A  
125 third nonblinded assessor decided the quality of the studies when disagreements occurred between the two  
126 assessors. This assessment did not determine the exclusion of any study. Please refer to supplemental table  
127 of the quality assessment of the studies included in this systematic review to avoid the risk of bias in  
128 Supplemental Digital Content 1.

## 129 **RESULTS**

### 130 **Search results**

131 The study selection process of this systematic review is presented with a flowchart diagram in Figure 1.  
132 The initial search resulted in 393 studies from two electronic databases. A total of 273 studies remained,  
133 and they were additionally screened after duplicate studies were removed. A total of 245 articles were

134 excluded through title and abstract screening. During full-text screening, the remaining 28 studies were  
135 reviewed, and 22 studies were removed because they included IPL treatment without LLLT (20 studies),  
136 they were non-English publications (1 study), and they were letters to the editor (1 study). Finally, six  
137 studies were included in this systematic review.<sup>22-25,27,28</sup>

### 138 **Study characteristics**

139 Detailed study characteristics are presented in Table 2. The design of the included studies was a series of  
140 cases published between 2019 and 2021. We studied 990 eyes from 495 patients with a mean age of  $59.3 \pm$   
141  $6.6$  years. The sex distribution was 337 females (75.2%) and 111 males (24.8%). Patient follow-up,  
142 expressed in months, ranged from 0.2 months<sup>28</sup> to 15 months<sup>27</sup> with a mean follow-up of  $5.5 \pm 5.11$  months.  
143 Regarding DED distribution, five studies reported EDE owing to MGD,<sup>22,24,25,27,28</sup> and 1 study reported  
144 mixed dry eye (MDE) due to Sjögren's Syndrome Dry Eye (SSDE) combined with MGD.<sup>23</sup> Regarding light  
145 therapy treatment, all included studies combined IPL with LLLT. Regarding the light therapy device, five  
146 studies<sup>23-25,27,28</sup> utilized Eye-light, and one study<sup>22</sup> utilized Epi C-Plus. Two studies<sup>22,27</sup> had conflicts of  
147 interest by the authors.

### 148 **Outcomes**

149 An evaluation of DED symptom and signs is presented in Table 3. Symptom outcomes were evaluated with  
150 the Ocular Surface Disease Index OSDI score. All included studies evaluated OSDI score, and it was  
151 significantly improved in all studies.

152 The signs outcomes were evaluated with NIBUT, BUT, TMH, OSM, ST, CFS, LLT, MGD scores,  
153 Meiboscore, MGD grade, and LAMG. Tear film break up time was examined in all studies included. Two  
154 studies<sup>25,27</sup> evaluated NIBUT and 4 studies<sup>22-24,28</sup> evaluated BUT. Concerning NIBUT, one study<sup>25</sup> showed  
155 a little, nonsignificant worsening. However, the other study<sup>27</sup> obtained a significant improvement with a  
156 previous and subsequent value of 4.3 s and 7.3 s, respectively. BUT was significantly improved in all  
157 studies. TMH and OSM were measured in two studies.<sup>25,27</sup> THM remained unchanged in one study,<sup>25</sup> while  
158 it had a little, nonsignificant improvement in the other study.<sup>27</sup> OSM was significantly worsened in one  
159 study<sup>25</sup> with a previous and subsequent value of 98.1 and 315.5 mOsm/L, respectively. However, it was  
160 significantly improved in the other study,<sup>27</sup> obtaining a previous and subsequent value of 319.2 to 304.3  
161 mOsm/L, respectively. ST was assessed in four studies,<sup>23-25,28</sup> remained unchanged in two studies,<sup>23,24</sup> had  
162 a little, nonsignificant improvement in one study<sup>28</sup> and a significant improvement in one study<sup>25</sup> with a

163 previous and subsequent value of 9.6 to 11.4 mm, respectively. CFS was examined in two studies.<sup>25,28</sup> CFS  
164 was significantly improved in one study<sup>25</sup> with a previous and subsequent CFS of 51.6 to 45.2%,  
165 respectively. However, it remained unchanged in the other study.<sup>28</sup> LLT was only measured in one study,<sup>25</sup>  
166 which was significantly improved with a previous and subsequent LLT of 47.4 to 73.9 nm, respectively.  
167 The MGD score and Meiboscore were evaluated in one study,<sup>28</sup> and they were significantly improved. The  
168 previous and subsequent MGD scores and Meiboscores were 12 to 10.50 and 2 to 1.50, respectively. MGD  
169 grade was examined in one study<sup>22</sup> with significant results, resulting in a previous and subsequent MGD  
170 grade of 3.6 (“Ropy” meibum) to 2.6 (Turbid and viscous oil appearance), respectively. LAMG was  
171 assessed in one study,<sup>25</sup> and it was greater after light therapy treatment. The previous and subsequent  
172 LAMG values were 10.9 to 16.7, respectively.

### 173 **Risk of bias**

174 Risk of bias assessment was classified into three evidence-level groups: studies with fewer than seven yeses  
175 (D’Souza et al.<sup>24</sup> and Solomos et al.<sup>28</sup>); studies with a value of seven yeses (Stonecipher et al.<sup>22</sup>, Di Marino  
176 et al.<sup>23</sup> and Pérez-Silguero et al.<sup>27</sup>); studies with more than seven yeses (Marta et al.<sup>25</sup>).

### 177 **DISCUSSION**

178 IPL or LLLT single therapy has demonstrated to improve some signs and symptoms in dry eye patients.  
179 Park et al.<sup>21</sup> reported a statistically significant improvement among the mean differences of score changes  
180 in CFS and ST after 6 LLLT treatment sessions for 3 weeks. However, they reported nonsignificant  
181 improvement in OSDI, NIBUT and meibomian gland function. Regarding IPL single therapy, meta-  
182 analyses concluded that IPL therapy alone significantly improves NIBUT with controversial results on  
183 symptoms in dry eye patients.<sup>2,32-34</sup> This systematic review aimed to report the effects in symptoms and  
184 signs achieved with IPL combined with LLLT as a treatment for DED; positive results were shown in  
185 OSDI, tear film stability and meibomian gland function.

### 186 **DED symptoms**

187 Although there are different questionnaires that assess dry eye symptoms, the OSDI questionnaire is the  
188 most widely used for DED studies.<sup>35</sup> All studies included in this systematic review assessed dry eye  
189 symptoms with the OSDI questionnaire, and reported a significantly lower OSDI score after IPL combined  
190 with LLLT. Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> achieved the lowest OSDI score at the end of follow-up, performing three sessions

191 of IPL combined with LLLT in comparison to the other studies that performed 4 sessions<sup>23,27,28</sup> or a single  
192 session.<sup>22,24</sup> Di Marino et al.<sup>23</sup> only achieved a 12-point reduction in the OSDI score. This may be because  
193 the study population was patients with MDEs due to SSDE combined with MGD, while in the other studies,  
194 the study populations were patients with EDEs due to MGD. Some studies have reported that patients with  
195 SSDE have more severe MGD, leading to greater ocular surface changes and symptoms.<sup>36,37</sup>

196 The improvement in dry eye symptoms may be explained by the effect of IPL and LLLT on the meibomian  
197 glands. Energy produced by IPL causes thrombosis of the abnormal blood vessels and necrosis of the  
198 Demodex located in the eyelid and eyelashes, respectively.<sup>7,15,16</sup> Therefore, the concentration of  
199 inflammatory and microbial mediators that alter the meibomian glands is reduced, thus improving their  
200 function.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, IPL increases eyelid temperature, allowing the meibum to become more fluid<sup>38,39</sup>.  
201 This process is enhanced by the addition of LLLT, which is suggested to repair compromised cells, improve  
202 cell function, and increase meibomian gland heat by the production of ATP, leading to better meibum  
203 flow.<sup>20,21</sup> All this improves the lipid layer of the tear film, which increases the quality and integrity of the  
204 tear film, resulting in reduced dry eye symptoms.

#### 205 **Ocular surface in DED**

206 Tear film stability, tear film volume, tear film composition and damage to ocular surface are tests  
207 recommended by TFOS DEWS II for the diagnosis of DED.<sup>35</sup> All included studies evaluated tear film  
208 stability. Stonecipher et al.<sup>22</sup>, Di Marino et al.<sup>23</sup>, D'Souza et al. and Solomos et al.<sup>28</sup> evaluated tear film  
209 stability with an invasive technique (BUT), while Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> and Pérez-Silguero et al.<sup>27</sup> performed a  
210 noninvasive technique (NIBUT). Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> was the only study that did not find a significant  
211 improvement in tear film stability. This may be because most of the study population had a pretreatment  
212 NIBUT of 10.2 s, while the other studies had a pretreatment NIBUT of 5.2 s or less. In addition, the DED  
213 diagnostic test battery created by the TFOS DEWS II suggests that a NIBUT below 10 s is a positive finding  
214 for DED.<sup>35</sup> Improvements in tear film stability in the other studies are due to an increase in tear film quality  
215 as a result of better meibomian gland function.

216 Tear film volume was assessed by TMH and ST. Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> and Pérez-Silguero et al.<sup>27</sup> measured THM  
217 with an IDRA Ocular Surface Analyser (SBM Sistemi, Torino, Italy) and Keratograph® 5 M (OCULUS  
218 Optikgeräte GmbH, Wetzlar, Germany), respectively. Both studies reported nonsignificant results in THM.  
219 Di Marino et al.,<sup>23</sup> D'Souza et al.,<sup>24</sup> Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> and Solomos et al.<sup>28</sup> measured ST, and only 1 study



220 reported significant results.<sup>25</sup> Tear volume, TMH and ST are related to lagrimal gland. These variables  
221 remained unchanged because IPL combined with LLLT aims to improves the lipid component of the tear  
222 due to the activation of the meibomian glands. Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> suggest that lacrimal gland secretion may be  
223 improved due to LLLT. However, Park et al.<sup>21</sup> reported controversial results in a RCT with LLLT therapy  
224 alone. Therefore, more studies are needed to justify the beneficial effects of the single or combined light  
225 therapy treatment on the lacrimal gland.

226 Tear film composition and damage to the ocular surface was determined by OSM and CFS, respectively.  
227 Tear hyperosmolarity is the main driver of DED.<sup>35,37,40,41</sup> Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> and Pérez-Silguero et al.<sup>27</sup> measured  
228 OSM with the TearLab Osmolarity System (TearLab, San Diego, CA, USA). Pérez-Silguero et al.<sup>27</sup>  
229 reported a significantly lower OSM after IPL combined with LLLT. Evaporation of the tear film is  
230 necessary to promote tear hyperosmolarity.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, improving the functionality of the meibomian  
231 glands with IPL combined with LLLT leads to an increase in tear film quality; thus, tear film evaporation  
232 is reduced, and tear osmolarity returns to normal values. However, Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> did not report a significant  
233 improvement in OSM. Some studies have suggested that current OSM measurement techniques are highly  
234 variable in DED patients.<sup>42,43</sup> For example, measuring tear OSM when tear film evaporates due to prolonged  
235 interblink periods may result in elevated tear OSM measurements, which may explain the results in this  
236 study.<sup>44</sup> Regarding damage to the ocular surface, Solomos et al.<sup>28</sup> reported that the degree of CFS, evaluated  
237 by the Oxford grading scale, was the same after light therapy treatment. However, Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> found a  
238 significant improvement in CFS, expressed as a percentage, but they did not grade CFS using a validated  
239 scale. Therefore, they could not effectively determine whether the degree of CFS decreased or remained  
240 unchanged. A better quality and integrity of tear film due to an improvement in meibomian gland function,  
241 which is achieved by IPL combined with LLLT, is the reason CFS is reduced.

242 Studies suggest that environmental factors such as low humidity and high temperature influence on CFS  
243 and OSM.<sup>45-48</sup> Moreover, Li et al.<sup>49</sup> reported that OSM may also vary over the course of 8 daytime hours.  
244 Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> and Solomos et al.<sup>28</sup> have not reported whether their measurements were performed at the  
245 same time of day and under the same environmental conditions, which may explain their results. In addition,  
246 it is important to consider that dry eye is a multifactorial and complex disease, which could explain the  
247 variability of all these results after IPL combined with LLLT.

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249 **Meibomian gland in DED**

250 The International Workshop on Meibomian gland dysfunction recommends the following tests for the  
251 diagnosis of MGD: LLT, morphological lid features, quality and quantity of meibum and meibography.<sup>50</sup>

252 Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> measured LLT using the IDRA Ocular Surface Analyser (SBM Sistemi, Torino, Italy),  
253 Solomos et al.<sup>28</sup> evaluated morphologic lid features with the MGD score, Stonecipher et al.<sup>22</sup> assessed  
254 meibum quality and quantity with an MGD grade, and Solomos et al.<sup>28</sup> and Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> evaluated  
255 meibography with meiboscore and LAMG, respectively. All these studies reported significant results in  
256 LLT, MGD score, MGD grade and meiboscore after IPL combined with LLLT due to a better function of  
257 meibomian glands. However, Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> reported an increase in LAMG at the end of follow-up. The  
258 meibomian glands tend to alter over time, and there is insufficient scientific evidence on the growth and  
259 regeneration of gland tissue after IPL. In addition, Marta et al.<sup>25</sup> expressed LAMG as a percentage, and they  
260 did not grade meibography with a validation scale, as Solomos et al.<sup>28</sup> did with meiboscore; thus, they could  
261 not effectively determine whether the degree of meibography increased or remained unchanged.

262 **Strengths and limitations**

263 To the best of our knowledge, this is the first systematic review that describes IPL combined with LLLT  
264 outcomes in DED treatment. All studies included in this systematic review used the Eye-light device for  
265 DED treatment. Stonecipher et al.<sup>22</sup> used the Epi C-Plus device, which is the name given to the Eye-light  
266 device in the USA; thus, the methodology of all studies is remarkably similar. The main limitation of our  
267 review is that all studies included are series of cases, many of them having a retrospective design, but it is  
268 important to consider that IPL and LLLT are novel treatments for DED, and the scientific literature  
269 combining both treatments is extremely limited. Therefore, larger, well-designed, strictly blinded,  
270 multicentre RCTs with extensive follow-up are needed. Another limitation is that two from six studies  
271 included in this systematic review reported conflict of interest with Eye-light or Epi C-Plus device,<sup>22,27</sup>  
272 which represent a significant form of bias.

273 In conclusion, this systematic review demonstrated that IPL combined with LLLT may be indicated for  
274 DED owing to MGD. IPL combined with LLLT for the treatment of dry eye improves meibomian gland  
275 function, reducing symptoms and signs of dry eye, such as OSDI and tear film stability, respectively.

276 However, there is still not enough scientific evidence to suggest that this method of treatment is able to  
277 improve TMH, OSM, ST and CFS.

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457 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

458 **FIG. 1.** PRISMA flow chart diagram.

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460 **SUPPLEMENTAL DIGITAL CONTENT LEGEND**

461 **Supplemental Digital Content 1.** Quality assessment of the articles.

462 The quality of the articles included in this systematic review was assessed through the following questions:

463 (Q1): Was the study question clearly stated?; (Q2): Were all the patient results taken into account?; (Q3):

464 Was the follow-up complete?; (Q4): Were the same conditions used in light therapy?; (Q5): Was the

465 intervention clearly described?; (Q6): Was the length of follow-up adequate? (Q7): Were the statistical

466 methods well-described? (Q8): Were the results well-described?

Table 2. Study characteristics

Author (date)	Design	Follow-up (months)	Patients	Eyes	Age	Sex (M/F)	Type of DED	Light therapy device	Sessions	Time intervals (weeks)	IPL (E/FT)	LLLT (E/FT)	Conflict of interest
Stonecipher et al, 2019 <sup>22</sup>	SC, RT, MT	3	230	460	65.5	60/170	EDE	Epi C-PLUS	NR	NR	10-16/600	110/633	Yes
Di Marino et al, 2021 <sup>23</sup>	SC, RT, MN	3	20	40	57.7	2/18	ADDE EDE	Eye-Light	4	1	10-16/600	110/633	No
D'Souza et al, 2021 <sup>24</sup>	SC, P, MN	6	47	94	NR	NR	EDE	Eye-Light	1	0	10-13/600	110/633	No
Marta et al, 2021 <sup>25</sup>	SC, P, MN	6	31	62	66.9	12/19	EDE	Eye-Light	3	1	10-16/600	110/633	No
Pérez-Silguero et al, 2021 <sup>27</sup>	SC, RT, MN	15	156	312	54.0	32/124	EDE	Eye-Light	4	1, 3, 8	10-16/600	110/633	Yes
Solomos et al, 2021 <sup>28</sup>	SC, RT, MN	0.2	11	22	52.6	5/6	EDE	Eye-Light	4	1	10-16/600	110/633	No

ADDE, Aqueous-deficient dry eye; EDE, Evaporative dry eye; E, Energy (Expressed in  $\text{j}/\text{cm}^2$ ); FT, Filter (Expressed in nm); IPL, Intense pulse light; LLLT, Low-level light therapy; M/F, Male/Female; MN, Monocentric; MT, Multicenter; NR, Not reported; P, Prospective; RT, Retrospective; SC, Serie of Cases.

**Table 3.** Evaluation of the clinical outcomes before and after IPL combined with LLLT on DED

Previous													
Author (date)	OSDI <sup>a</sup>	NIBUT	BUT	TMH	OSM	ST	CFS	LLT	MGD Score <sup>d</sup>	MGD Grade <sup>e</sup>	Meiboscore <sup>f</sup>	LAMG <sup>b</sup>	Favor / Against
Stonecipher et al, 2019 <sup>22</sup>	42.2	NR	4.4	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	3.6	NR	NR	Favor
Di Marino et al, 2021 <sup>23</sup>	50.5	NR	3.5	NR	NR	8.6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	Favor
D'Souza et al, 2021 <sup>24</sup>	39.1	NR	5.2	NR	NR	17.6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	Favor
Marta et al, 2021 <sup>25</sup>	45.0	10.2	NR	0.3	298.1	9.6	51.6 <sup>b</sup>	47.4	NR	NR	NR	10.9	Favor
Pérez-Silguero et al, 2021 <sup>27</sup>	58.3	4.3	NR	0.1	319.2	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	Favor
Solomos et al, 2021 <sup>28</sup>	33.7	NR	4.5	NR	NR	12.0	1 <sup>c</sup>	NR	12.0	NR	2.0	NR	Favor
Posterior													
Author (date)	OSDI <sup>a</sup>	NIBUT	BUT	TMH	OSM	ST	CFS	LLT	MGD Score <sup>d</sup>	MGD Grade <sup>e</sup>	Meiboscore <sup>f</sup>	LAMG <sup>b</sup>	Favor / Against
Stonecipher et al, 2019 <sup>22</sup>	24.2	NR	8.00	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	2.6	NR	NR	Favor
Di Marino et al, 2021 <sup>23</sup>	38.3	NR	5.30	NR	NR	10.2	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	Favor
D'Souza et al, 2021 <sup>24</sup>	24.4	NR	7.4	NR	NR	17.6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	Favor
Marta et al, 2021 <sup>25</sup>	8.2	9.9	NR	0.3	315.5	11.4	45.2 <sup>b</sup>	73.9	NR	NR	NR	16.7	Favor
Pérez-Silguero et al, 2021 <sup>27</sup>	28.2	7.3	NR	0.2	304.3	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	Favor
Solomos et al, 2021 <sup>28</sup>	19.2	NR	6.5	NR	NR	12.0	1 <sup>c</sup>	NR	10.5	NR	1.5	NR	Favor

BUT, Break-Up Time (Expressed in seconds); CFS, Corneal Fluorescein Staining; DED, Dry Eye Disease; IPL, Intense Pulse Light; LAMG, Loss Area of Meibomian Gland (Expressed in percentage); LLLT, Low-Level Light Therapy; LLT, Lipid Layer thickness (Expressed in nm); MGD, Meibomian Gland Dysfunction; NIBUT, Non-Invasive Break-Up Time (Expressed in seconds); NR, Not reported; OSDI, Ocular Surface Disease Index; OSM, Osmolarity (Expressed in mOsm/L); ST, Schirmer's Test (Expressed in mm); TMH, Tear Meniscus Height (Expressed in mm).

<sup>a</sup>Values to 0 to 100 <sup>b</sup>Expressed in percentage; <sup>c</sup>Oxford grading scale; <sup>d</sup>Values to 0 to 15; <sup>e</sup>Values to 0 to 4; <sup>f</sup>Values to 0 to 6.

