

Shellie Rosen  
Ph.D., DOM, L.Ac

# Herb Doc

Shellie Rosen is a Doctor of Oriental Medicine. She can be reached via her website at [Bodyvolve.com](http://Bodyvolve.com)

## Put On the Red Light

and vitamin D production, improving mood, immunity, and sleep. Skin exposure to the invisible ultraviolet (UV) rays of sunlight produces nitrogen oxides that trigger vascular dilation, lowering blood pressure. Wavelengths that reach deeper adipose tissue can boost metabolism. Sunlight can calm inflammation and contribute to a longer life. Windows bring the sun inside, but glass filters beneficial invisible wavelengths. Direct sunlight is the gold standard of UV wavelength exposure, and red-light technology is a second option.

Red-light therapy or photobiomodulation (PBM) offers low wavelengths of light that can stimulate cellular energy production. Dentists, medical clinics, and professional athletes have used light therapy for decades, but the therapeutic research on PBM dates back more than a century: In 1903, Dr. Niels Ryberg Finsen earned the Nobel Prize “in recognition of this contribution to the treatment of diseases, especially lupus vulgaris, with concentrated light radiation....”

In the 1980s, while NASA was

researching the benefit of red light for plants shuttled to space, astronauts working with plants under the lights “noticed little scratches on their hands began to heal,” according to biomedical science researcher Janis T. Eells.

Further, Dr. Michael Hamblin authored more than 1,000 studies on the effect of light on biology. One titled “Photobiomodulation for Traumatic Brain Injury and Stroke,” published in the Journal of Neuroscience Research, states, “In healthy human volunteers (including students and healthy elderly women) PBM has been shown to increase regional cerebral blood flow, tissue oxygenation and improve memory, mood, and cognitive function,” using a red-light light head cap.

Medical-grade red lights aim to mimic wavelengths that benefit mitochondria and metabolic health without adverse side effects. Red-light wavelengths range from 600-950 nanometers (nm). Not all red lamps are medical grade. A red light from a hardware store may generate dangerous amounts of heat upwards of 1,000 nm. A medical-grade red-light at 660 nm benefits

skin health (collagen production/wound and scar healing). The invisible near-infrared light (NIR) at 850 nm enters deeper tissues and helps inflammation and recovery.

Getting the benefits from direct sunlight is essential. Medical-grade red-light therapy is an additional way to access wavelengths of light for health and healing injuries and is an excellent way to target specific areas for healing without getting a sunburn. If you have a certain health condition for which you seek a remedy - pain, healing an injury healing, skin rejuvenation, thyroid function, muscle building, mental acuity, etc. - you want to seek a device that delivers the appropriate wavelengths to benefit your needs.

Good quality lights range in price from \$200-\$10,000, so make sure to do your research to find a high-performance medical tool without overspending.

Abundant Blessings to your sunny days! Dr. Shellie L. Rosen, Ph.D., Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)®, DOM, L.Ac.

The National Human Activity Pattern Survey revealed in 2021 that Americans spend 93 percent of life indoors. That’s not good. The direct sunlight we’re deprived of has numerous health benefits. It improves sleep, mood, energy, blood pressure, metabolism, inflammation, bone health, immunity, and overall well-being. To compensate for the many hours spent inside, supplementing with medical-grade red-light therapy is worth consideration as it can bring health benefits similar to those provided by the sun’s rays.

Concentrations of wavelengths of the sun change throughout the day and enter the body at different levels. Morning sunlight shuts down melatonin (the sleep hormone) and increases serotonin



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