Niels Ryberg Finsen Encyclopedia Article

Niels Ryberg Finsen

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Niels Ryberg Finsen

1860-1904

Danish physician best known for developing the Finsen treatment, which used artificial light to treat skin conditions. The Finsen lamp (developed in 1893) directed a carbon arc emitting ultraviolet rays on the skin, primarily treating lupus. The light penetrates a small area of skin through quartz telescopes, while a flow of cold water keeps the skin cool. Finsen founded the Finsen Institute in Copenhagen, for the study of phototherapy and skin conditions.