

From the Board



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Waterlase MD Does it Better

No single product or procedure has helped to improve the quality of esthetic dentistry recently, as the

Waterlase MD laser from Biolase Technology, Inc. Although I was very happy with my previous two lasers, the Waterlase and the

LaserSmile (Biolase Technology, Inc) diode laser, the Waterlase MD does what each of these other lasers did, and does it better.

In some ways, lasers are a lot like loupes in the sense that if you practice without these technologies you will convince yourself that you can do just as good a job as you could with them. Of course, if you talk to any dentist who regularly uses loupes or lasers, they will tell you the same thing: they could not practice without these technologies. What is the reason that dentists feel this way about these technologies? They know that they perform better dentistry with these products and get it done faster.

“For the first time, an erbium-family laser has a mode that is ideal for soft tissue procedures and a separate mode for cutting hard tissue and bone.”

Since the new Waterlase MD works equally well on hard tissue or soft tissue, it makes it the ideal laser for a general dental practice as well as for an esthetic practice. When you find that you are able to trim gingival tissue atraumatically, with nearly perfect hemostasis, you will find that almost every restorative case you do needs some tissue recontouring, and the outcome of your cases will improve as well. To see why the Waterlase MD can take the place of two other lasers in your practice, take a closer look at some of its capabilities.

Modes for Cutting Hard and Soft Tissue

One of its best features is the two distinct pulse modes. For the first time, an erbium-family laser has a mode that is ideal for soft tissue procedures and a separate mode for cutting hard tissue and bone.

The new soft tissue mode (‘S mode’) widens the laser wavelength, resulting in a smoother, scalpel-like cut, while achieving hemostasis and

the mask is reduced, theoretically reducing the potential for pathogens to wick through the mask material. The shield may extend the life of a mask, but it should never be used instead of the mask if respiratory protection is appropriate (Figure 6).

Latex Content

All Crosstex masks, shields, and eyewear are nonlatex. With increasing numbers of health care professionals and patients demonstrating latex sensitivity or allergy, choosing 100% nonlatex products is the best strategy to avoid an emergency (Figure 7).

Anticipating the Best Face Protection

Protective Eyewear

Infection control protective eyewear gives maximum ultraviolet protection, is high impact, scratch resistant, and distortion free, while giving side protection against eye injury. Each pair is comfortable with telescoping arms, brow guards, and lightweight frames.

Face Shields

The nonlatex shield is optically clear, resists fogging, and stands out from the face for comfort and without pressure on the temples.

Based on conditions in each facility, such as equipment, air circulation, suction, climate, and temperature, levels of mask saturation can be estimated along with aerosol generation for each procedure. It makes sense to discuss this with the dental team to predetermine the level of protection warranted for various practices. Clinicians should understand the difference between spatter protection and aerosol protection and be able to select appropriate products.³ Crosstex masks, eyewear, and shields were developed to meet critical selection criteria and can be easily chosen because Crosstex provides the essential information (Figure 8). For every procedure, there is an optimal combination of Crosstex products.

A mask's performance is influenced by variables such as becoming soiled or saturated.^{1,5,7} Dental team members should observe and help each other when choosing and wearing masks and other face protection, pointing out poor fit, visi-

ble contamination, or inappropriate product selection for the task.

Conclusion

The right combination of either eyewear and masks or face shields and masks is a necessary decision to make for every dental or laboratory procedure. Crosstex offers the face protection system

along with the information needed to select optimally. ■

Acknowledgment

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eliminating any thermal trauma to the soft tissue. This is great for sculpting gingival tissue and performing many other esthetic soft tissue procedures with little to no bleeding, smoother incisions, and greater patient comfort.

The new hard tissue mode ('H' mode) delivers energy to the tissue in a shorter, more intense wave-

length with a higher peak power at the top of each pulse. The pulses are shorter and more staccato-like, which makes it highly efficient at cutting enamel, dentin, and bone.

Combine these two modes with the laser's other unique capabilities (eg, choose from between 10 and 50 pulses per second, or between 0.1 and 8.0 watts of energy) and

you have a device that is truly customizable.

Other areas where the Waterlase MD impressed me are the storage wells for tips and extra handpieces, the inset water bottle and logos that glow a bright blue, a powerful touch-screen interface that offers on-the-fly assistance, and many makes-sense enhance-

ments, including self-calibration and automatic purging of air and water from the delivery system at the end of the day.

The Waterlase MD also boasts some other improvements over its predecessors that are worth mentioning. The handpiece is now a contra-angle handpiece—very similar to the high-speed handpieces we use all day long—so there is an air of familiarity with the handpiece even when using the laser for the first time. The handpiece also has a much smaller head, allowing you easy access to posterior teeth, and the Waterlase MD is perfect for doing pediatric cases and other mouths with limited access. Fiber optics were added to the handpiece as well, so that the head of the handpiece now has its own illumination source.

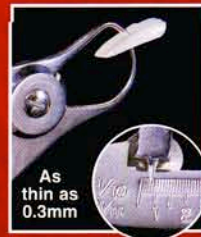
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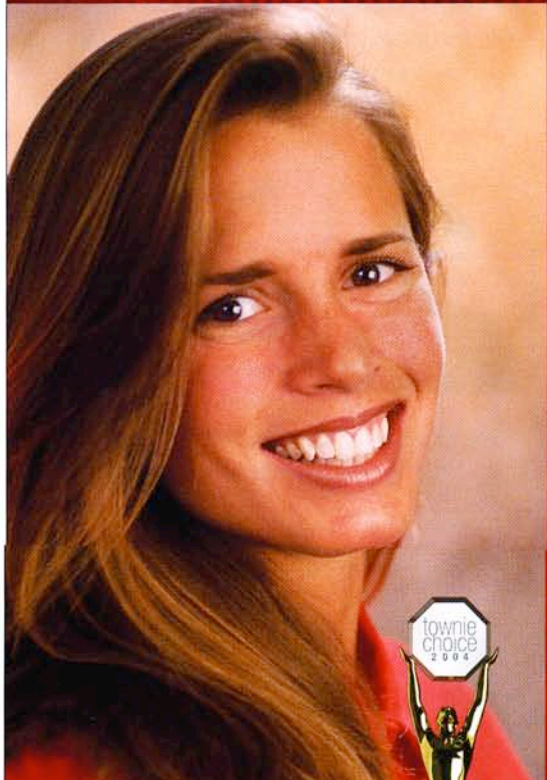
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If you have been sitting on the fence with lasers, waiting for one to come along that will do everything well, your wait has ended.

The air/water nozzle technology also has been redesigned, allowing you to cut efficiently on tooth bone, and soft tissue with less air and water being sprayed into the operative zone, substantially increasing your ability to see the work the laser is doing.

Conclusion

If you have been sitting on the fence with lasers, waiting for one to come along that will do everything well, your wait has ended. Whether you have an esthetic practice and want to do gummy smile cases or ovate pontic receptor site cases, or if you have a general practice and want to crank out efficient operative dentistry without a drill or a needle, the best instrument to accomplish these goals has arrived. ■



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