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TriLux Process Targets Three Layers of Skin

The TriLux™ process from Palomar Medical Technologies is a three layer approach to skin rejuvenation that incorporates three distinct handpiece attachments of the Palomar StarLux® pulsed light and laser system. Each of the three handpieces treats a different layer of the dermis and epidermis for an overall improvement in skin tone, smoothness and laxity.

“I think the TriLux process allows the practitioner to do layered rejuvenation,” said David Vasily, M.D., medical director at Aesthetica Cosmetic and Laser Surgery Center in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, U.S. “You can accomplish toning and firming of the deeper tissue with the fractional IR handpiece, then use it in sequence or tandem with the fractional 1540 handpiece, which is useful for rhytides and acne scars. Finally, the LuxG™ handpiece allows us to address the epidermal component – brown spots as well as telangiectasia. With these three devices, you can pretty much do it all in skin rejuvenation.”



Before Tx



After LuxIR Tx

One of three handpieces used in the TriLux process, the LuxG pulsed light handpiece is designed to address skin tone and has a penetration depth of 0.4 mm (400 microns) to target the epidermis and hypodermis. This green light handpiece is optimized to target pigmented lesions by filtering light in the dual wavelength ranges of 500 to 670 nm and 870 to 1400 nm.

A second handpiece, the Lux1540 Fractional™ laser handpiece, uses Palomar's patented fractional photothermolysis method to achieve soft tissue coagulation and non-ablative skin resurfacing with minimal downtime. This device delivers light in an array of high precision microbeams which penetrate deep into the epidermis and dermis (up to 1 mm).

The third handpiece is the LuxIR Fractional™ Infrared handpiece, which also uses fractional technology to deliver skin tightening through soft tissue coagulation. This handpiece transmits infrared (IR) light pulses deep into the dermis (up to 3 mm), where they create a carefully controlled area of elevated temperature. Deep heating with infrared light can also stimulate increased collagen production for long lasting results.

continued on page 4

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Circulation: 12,000

UltraShape Contouring.....	15
Pneumatic Skin Tx	18
Accent Dual Mode RF.....	26
EADV Congress Preview	28
Affirm Technology	40
Lutronic Launch.....	45
Dermamelan Pack.....	50
Thermafine Lift	56
ColBar Acquired by J & J.....	60
Facial Injectables Review.....	62
Laresse Dermal Filler	72
Aluma RF Device	91



Peter Bjerring, M.D., Ph.D.

AAWC Show
Review

.....
Page 80

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continued from page 1

Because of time constraints on both patients and himself, Dr. Vasily tends to stagger and alternate the three handpieces. “I normally use only one handpiece during a session. If patients have excessive lentigines and telangiectasis, they may need one or two photofacials with the LuxG handpiece at about three to four week intervals.” This is often followed by alternating the LuxIR and the Lux1540 handpieces every other week for three sessions of each.

Overall, there are usually eight sessions of the TriLux process, spaced over two to three months. “Patients will see immediate results with photofacials using the LuxG handpiece,” Dr. Vasily stated. “This is very helpful because it allows for the necessary wait time to notice the results of deeper tissue coagulation and firming with the LuxIR handpiece. Patients will also see some immediate results with the Lux1540 handpiece. Patient feedback has been very positive. They are happy to be able to finally address all three issues. They can pick and choose or combine handpieces.”

Dr. Vasily believes it is important to start with the LuxG photofacial as a way to gradually build up both patient confidence and physician familiarity with the StarLux system. “By patients seeing immediate results from the photofacial, this makes them more receptive to the results they can expect from the other

an assistant clinical professor of surgery (with an emphasis in plastic surgery) at New York Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical School in Manhattan, New York, U.S. “On the other hand, the LuxIR handpiece definitely tones and tightens skin, especially in women with thin skin on their necks. We’re seeing a lot

“I believe this fractional approach to resurfacing is the state-of-the-art method to take care of patients with fine lines and scarring.”

of rejuvenation and tightening of skin on the neck. And the Lux1540 handpiece is a nice gentle way of performing non-ablative resurfacing. I believe this fractional approach to resurfacing is the state-of-the-art method to take care of patients with fine lines and scarring, and even some pigmentation. There is also no downtime when using any of these handpieces.”

For treatment limited to the LuxIR or Lux1540 handpiece during a session, Dr. Rothaus recommends one session every month. “I try to alternate these two handpieces, so a patient comes in once every two weeks,” he said. “However, I generally first treat the patient with the LuxG handpiece.” Two weeks after completing a third session of the LuxG, Dr. Rothaus waits two weeks, then alternates between the other two handpieces. The entire program takes about five to six months.

“Patients can expect their skin pigmentation to even out and their skin tone to feel firmer,” Dr. Rothaus conveyed. “Patients may notice better definition along their mandible and as far as their neck. They should also see an improvement in imperfections of the skin, such as fine lines and wrinkles. Acne scars will improve, too. I recommend that patients come in three or four times a year for a touch-up with the LuxG handpiece.”

Dr. Rothaus appreciates the fact that the StarLux platform is modular. “You can add to it as you go along,” he said. “Palomar’s platform offers tissue cooling, and the complication rate with the handpieces is minimal. As a plastic surgeon, the TriLux Process really allows me to help my surgical patients seeking anti-aging aesthetic procedures.”



Nasal telangiectasia before Tx

Nasal telangiectasia after LuxG

two handpieces. This is a very exciting time in cosmetic surgery to have these devices available. I think we are seeing just the tip of the iceberg of what these fractional devices can and will do.”

“The LuxG handpiece takes care of brown spots and vessels. It is also great for rosacea and adds a little collagen to the skin,” said Kenneth Rothaus, M.D.,

Haneef Alibhai, M.D., a cosmetic physician in private practice in British Columbia, Canada, usually treats a patient with the LuxG handpiece on the first visit “to clear any pigment and vascularity and improve the texture of the skin.” Two weeks later, the LuxIR handpiece is used for “tightening of the skin surface, due to the shrinkage of the collagen structure and remodeling at the hypodermis junction. This is followed two weeks later by retreatment with the LuxG. A total of six sessions are scheduled (three for each of the two handpieces), spaced two weeks apart.



Haneef Alibhai, M.D.
Private Practice
British Columbia, Canada

“The combination is the key to success,” Dr. Alibhai stressed. “We do one pass with the green handpiece and two or three passes with the infrared handpiece. A typical session takes about 30 to 45 minutes. By first treating with the LuxG handpiece, I think the skin is prepared for the infrared tissue tightening by allowing the light to pass through better and to penetrate deeper. Because the IR wavelength is very poorly absorbed by melanin and oxyhemoglobin, it is much more selective to deep molecular water. Therefore,

“I believe we’re going to see more and more patient demand and increased patient awareness of the three layered approach for total rejuvenation.”

these two handpieces are very complementary.” Dr. Alibhai also pointed out that many patients observe continued improvement with the combined therapy two to three months after completing a series.

“The TriLux process makes perfect sense because we really need to think about rejuvenation of the skin as a three mode process,” said Robert Weiss, M.D., an associate professor of dermatology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S. “We start with the surface defects of pigmentation,



Before Tx

After Lux1540 Fractional Tx

telangiectasia and rough skin texture. We then move into wrinkles and scars, followed by dermal tightening.”

Dr. Weiss and his colleagues conducted a clinical study of the LuxIR handpiece. “There was 1 to 2 mm of tightening measured on reproducible images. Theoretically, you can use all three handpieces within the same session. However, we usually schedule two out of the three. We may start with the LuxIR handpiece because it penetrates the deepest and has little effect on the surface, other than some redness. This is followed by either the Lux1540 or the LuxG handpiece.” A session with two of the three handpieces lasts about 40 minutes. “You can treat not only the face, but the neck and chest. We’ve also done the arms and legs.”



Robert Weiss, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Dermatology
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Hunt Valley, MD, USA

Combining the LuxIR and Lux1540 is Dr. Weiss’ most popular indication. “Once you treat a patient with the LuxG the skin becomes red and there is darkening of the pigment, so it is very hard to do another treatment at the same session. He recommends a total of five treatment sessions, spaced at least three to four weeks apart. “Typically, patients will achieve tightening in the range of 10% to 20%, along with a noticeable improvement in wrinkles.”

By using two handpieces, “patients feel they are accelerating their treatment program,” Dr. Weiss noted. “There is also very little discomfort. Most treatments can be performed without any application of topical anesthetic. I believe we’re going to see more and more patient demand and increased patient awareness of the three layered approach for total rejuvenation.”

The Lux1540 has been FDA cleared in the U.S. for soft tissue coagulation. A 510k has been submitted for skin resurfacing. ■