

Candela's GentleYAG

Effectively Tightens Skin



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The safety profile for the GentleYAG, as far as skin tightening, is outstanding. My satisfaction with the GentleYAG for skin tightening has been very high.



By Bob Kronemyer, Associate Editor

Significant skin tightening results, with minimal risk and side effects are nearly everyday occurrences at the Cosmetic Laser Center of the Lehigh Valley, in Allentown, Penn., thanks to the GentleYAG laser from Candela Corporation (Wayland, Mass.). "There are very few treatments that provide such benefit with such a low risk profile," stated medical director John Pettine, M.D., who has treated several hundred patients with the 1064 nm Nd:YAG laser. "I have not had a single problem with dyspigmentation or blisters or anything else. The results are outstanding."

Dr. Pettine acknowledged that skin tightening is in the eye of the beholder, to some degree. "But, for me, it is improved texture changes, decreased pore size, refining fine lines and giving a little more lift or elasticity to the skin," he noted. Changes are most prominent in the jowl area and neck when treating the face and neck.

Dr. Pettine tries to limit the procedure to patients between the ages of 30 and 60. A typical full face and neck session lasts about 25 minutes. "An abdomen may take about 15 minutes, hands five to ten minutes, knees five minutes and thighs/hips about ten minutes," Dr. Pettine reported. The protocol is four treatment sessions, monthly.

Three passes (vertical, horizontal, diagonal) are performed on the cheeks and neck. Dr. Pettine also occasionally does a fourth pass in a particular area, if he feels the skin can handle it. "But the trick is not to do an entire side of the face at one time," he explained. "By doing too much area at one time, you lose the heat by the second pass. Concentrating on smaller areas will generate more heat, which ultimately leads to better results."

Parameters for skin tightening include a 10 mm spot size, 50 ms pulse duration,

and 50 J/cm² on the face and neck. "On the forehead, though, we perform only two passes at 40 J/cm². The rest of the settings are the same," Dr. Pettine said. Furthermore, no downtime is associated with treatment. "The GentleYAG is able to deliver enough energy safely to the dermis, without overheating like some other devices which penetrate too far down to the fat layer and leave some scarring," he said.

After a series of treatments with the GentleYAG, 70% of patients at Dr. Pettine's cosmetic laser center achieve significant improvement in skin tightening, 20% to 25% attain mild-to-moderate improvement, and 5% to 10% minimal improvement.

Patient discomfort is minimized by applying ELA-Max 5% (Ferndale Laboratories, Ferndale, Mich.) 30 minutes prior to treatment. "No one seems to mind the pain and patients keep coming back," Dr. Pettine conveyed. "Also, we put a little pressure behind where we are lasering. This sort of dulls the discomfort." Moreover, Candela's Dynamic Cooling Device (DCD) is a cryogen system that helps cool the epidermis before treatment.

In Dr. Pettine's hands, tissue tightening lasts 12 months on average, but sometimes as long as 18 months, with the GentleYAG. "We have many brochures, posters and other information in every room of our office," he said. "When someone comes in for hair removal, we'll mention skin tightening if we think the person is a good candidate."

Dr. Pettine also noted the procedure is priced right for patients and can be profitable for a practice. "Patients say they can't believe this is me," he said. "You feel proud that you are able to deliver such good results and take off maybe five years of a patient's appearance."