

Physician Relies on Alma's Product Line to Treat Ethnic and Darker Skin Tones

By Bob Kronemyer, Associate Editor

It has been estimated that by the year 2056, more than half of the U.S. population will be comprised of people of color. As this demographic matures, the demand for aesthetic procedures such as hair removal, skin rejuvenation, skin tightening, acne treatment and body contouring will continue to grow. In 2008, *The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery* reported that the treatment of ethnic and darker skin types accounted for 20% of all aesthetic procedures performed.

"I think there is great interest for aesthetic services among all ethnic groups," said Seema Patel, M.D., medical director at The Institute for Optimal Health and Advanced Skincare, in Ardmore, Penn., who estimates that 35% of her patients are ethnic or have darker skin. To satisfy this need, Dr. Patel uses a combination of treatments including light-based, laser and radiofrequency (RF) platforms offered by Alma Lasers, Inc. (Buffalo Grove, Ill.).

Dr. Patel most commonly performs procedures for acne, skin resurfacing and hair removal. "I like Alma systems because they can safely be used on all skin types," she noted. Dr. Patel herself is classified as a Fitzpatrick IV skin type. "Patients with darker skin tones are concerned with how lasers can affect their skin. I feel confident that Alma provides one of the safest profiles for this group."

One of Dr. Patel's most popular treatments is with the Pixel 2940 nm Er:YAG module on the Harmony^{XL} platform for fractionated skin resurfacing. "I can use this module for acne scarring, hyperpigmentation, aging skin and improving

skin tone." Dr. Patel first pre-treats ethnic skin with hydroquinone and Retin-A, four to six weeks before Pixel treatment to reduce the likelihood of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. The average number of sessions is three to four, performed every two to three months. "However, most patients are satisfied after the second or third treatment," she conveyed. "The hyperpigmentation is diminished, skin tone is more even, fine lines and acne scars are improved and nasolabial lines are softened."

The Pixel Er:YAG module can also be combined during the same treatment session with the Accent^{XL}, a separate platform using bi-polar and unipolar radiofrequency for skin tightening to enhance the resurfacing results.

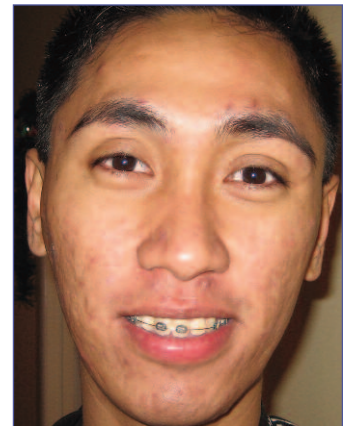
Patient comfort and minimizing downtime are important to increasing practice growth and laser revenue. According to Dr. Patel, "Alma products utilize integrated contact cooling, IN-Motion delivery and offer minimal to no downtime procedures." Furthermore, "the combination of affordable equipment and no disposables creates a competitive advantage to set your practice apart and allows patients to reap the benefits," she added.

"Culturally, what patients consider attractive can vary between ethnic groups," Dr. Patel said. "I always ask my patients what they are trying to achieve. Alma Lasers offers wonderful platforms to provide safe and effective treatment options that meet the aesthetic desires for many different ethnicities. This unique focus creates an amazing opportunity to rapidly grow an aesthetic practice."



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Before Tx



After two Pixel treatments
Photos courtesy of Seema Patel, M.D.