

Great Wavelengths

Dental procedures may soon be performed quicker, more effectively, and more comfortably thanks to the growing popularity of laser dentistry.

What is a laser?

A laser is an instrument that generates a very narrow, intense beam of concentrated energy. When laser light comes in contact with tissue, it causes a reaction. The light produced by the laser can remove, vaporize, or shape tissue.

How are lasers used in dentistry?

There are many different types of lasers used in dentistry and their applications vary. Some lasers are used for surgery, some to cure restorative materials and enhance tooth bleaching, and some to remove tooth structure for elimination of disease and restoration.

What are the benefits of using dental lasers?

There are several benefits. Dentists may not need to use a drill or administer anesthesia, allowing the patient to enjoy a more relaxed dental experience. Laser procedures can be more precise. Also, lasers can reduce the symptoms and healing times associated with traditional therapies because they sterilize the affected area and seal off blood vessels.

Are dental lasers safe?

Yes, lasers have been used in dentistry since 1990. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration determined that lasers can be used as a safe and effective treatment for a wide range of dental procedures.



If the dental laser is used according to accepted practices by a trained practitioner, then it is at least as safe as other dental instruments. The primary safety measure necessary during laser treatment is use of proper protective eyewear by both the patient and the dentist.

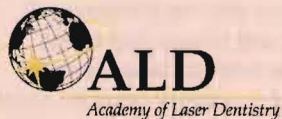
How can I be sure my dentist is properly trained to use a laser?

Ask your dentist questions about the extent of his or her laser education and training. Make sure that your dentist

has participated in educational courses and received training by the laser manufacturer. Many dental schools, dental associations, and the Academy of Laser Dentistry (ALD) offer dental laser education. The ALD offers both dental laser education and credentialing.

How will I know if treatment with a dental laser is an option for me?

Ask your dentist. Although the laser is a very useful dental instrument, it is not appropriate for every dental procedure.



Resources

www.knowyourteeth.com

Brought to you by the AGD, this Web site answers important dental health questions, offers the latest information on current treatments, provides tips for first-rate oral hygiene, and it can help visitors find highly qualified general dentists near where they live.

1.877.2X.A.YEAR

AGD's toll-free referral number. Call to locate an AGD member dentist in your area.

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