

New Dual-Wavelength Module Facilitates Efficient and Effective Tattoo Removal

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Alma Lasers, Inc. (Buffalo Grove, Ill.) has launched a new High Power Q-switched module for the Harmony^{XL} aesthetic laser platform allowing rapid, safe, and effective treatments previously only available through stand-alone systems. With frequency doubling technology and unique multiple pulse energy delivery, this module maximizes peak power for the efficacious removal of tattoos and pigmented lesions.

Tattoo removal is becoming an exceptionally popular procedure and a staple of aesthetic laser practices nationwide. According to Len DeRouen, M.D., medical director of the Skin Care Laser Center in Biloxi, Miss., the key to patient satisfaction with tattoo removal goes well beyond the final result. “Basic tattoo removal is still the same. Laser energy is directed toward skin cells infused with tattoo pigment, which act as a chromophore for the wavelength.”

These cells are disrupted and the body’s natural waste removal processes take over to remove the debris. Inevitably, some pigment is left behind and reabsorbed by healthy skin cells, making additional treatments necessary. “The industry has yet to invent a method that doesn’t involve multiple treatments and a lot of discomfort,” Dr. DeRouen continued. “If we want to improve patient satisfaction we have to improve the treatment experience for the patient.”

In Dr. DeRouen’s experience the various features of the new High Power Q-switched module for Harmony^{XL} reduce treatment time and can also reduce the number of treatments needed to achieve the final result. “Making tattoo removal easier and more tolerable for the patient translates into higher satisfaction with the overall experience. It’s an indirect benefit but it translates into a direct advantage for the physician.”

Frequency doubling technology, incorporated in the new handpiece, allows users to easily switch between two key tattoo removal wavelengths: the 1064 nm for darker inks (black, blues and greens) and the 532 nm wavelength for lighter colors (reds, oranges and yellows). The simplified switching feature also makes it easier to treat pigmented lesions. Spot sizes of 3 mm and 5 mm are available.

In terms of improved results, Dr. DeRouen said the high power of the device is helpful for maximizing outcomes. “As we get closer to the final result, there is less chromophore available to absorb energy because there is less ink. Therefore, more power is required in order to deliver enough energy to cause the requisite disruption of skin cells that promotes additional clearance of pigment,” he explained. “The multiple pulse delivery allows for the safer distribution of this energy.”

Treatment with the High Power Q-switched module is more efficient as well, Dr. DeRouen reported. “Between the spot size, rapid switching between tips and wavelengths, as well as increased power, I can treat more rapidly than I can with other systems,” he said. “In many cases I achieve the desired result in fewer treatments, maybe five to eight instead of eight to ten as is normally expected.”

Safety features include a double triggering system and a quick-snap tip which can be easily and rapidly swapped out to speed up treatment and help prevent cross contamination. “I have yet to find a platform that allows me to effectively perform as many different procedures as Harmony^{XL},” Dr. DeRouen added. “Most other tattoo removal systems are free standing and space is at a premium in many offices as it is with mine.”