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Affirm Fractional Resurfacing

Leading aesthetic practitioners are achieving long-term benefits when they treat scarring and photodamage with the 1440 nm Nd:YAG Affirm laser device from Cynosure, Inc. (Westford, Massachusetts, U.S.). "Clinical results last as long as we've been using the Affirm, which is a year and a half to two years," said Bruce Katz, M.D., who uses the Affirm to resurface skin and to treat wrinkles, lentiginos, acne scarring and pigmentation changes. "So far we've seen no need for maintenance treatments, providing patients don't bake in the sun." continued on page 4

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Affirm Provides Persistent Results Without Maintenance Treatments

BY FRED WILSON, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Photos courtesy of Bruce Katz, M.D.



Before Tx



After Affirm Tx

"We've seen improvement in as little as two treatments but we tell patients it will take three to four treatments before they start to see anything."

According to Dr. Katz, medical director of JUVA Skin and Laser Center in New York, New York, U.S., the Affirm is the newest fractional resurfacing technology. "The Affirm creates microthermal zones, but also delivers energy between the microthermal zones," he explained.

"This is the Combined Apex Pulse (CAP) technology that allows you to not only stimulate new collagen but also to create collagen remodeling in the areas between the microthermal zones. Sun damage occurs at 100 to 300 microns, the targeted depth of Affirm. With healthy tissue separating the superheated zones, healing is rapid and downtime is minimal."



Bruce Katz, M.D.
Clinical Professor of
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Robert Weiss, M.D., who has also treated patients with the Affirm for a year and a half, has not yet found maintenance treatments necessary. "We haven't used the Affirm long enough for a maintenance treatment. We tell patients to expect their wrinkle improvement to last two to three years." Dr. Weiss also uses the Affirm to treat photodamage and scars. "We find that when scars are remodeled, that's long-term. We don't want to say permanent, but we can expect scar remodeling to last for years unless another injury causes more scarring or another round of acne." Dr. Weiss, associate professor of dermatology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S., has also used the Affirm successfully against ice pick scars. "I knew the only alternative I had was punch grafting and more aggressive

surgical procedures. To my amazement, I've seen significant improvement in the ice pick scars after treatment with the Affirm."

An oculoplastic surgeon in private practice in Nashville, Tennessee, U.S., Brian Biesman, M.D., uses the Affirm to treat photodamage and scars due to acne and surgery. "I've had the Affirm for a year and I haven't had to give a maintenance treatment yet," he noted. "With acne scars I might ask a patient to come back for a spot treatment on a few areas that need it. With the Affirm, I think it's reasonable to expect good duration as opposed to an injectable product that's metabolized. But I don't make promises to patients."

Patients generally start to see improvement after several treatments with the Affirm. "We've seen improvement in as little as two treatments but we tell patients it will take three to four treatments before they start to see anything," Dr. Weiss said. He added that maximum

Photos courtesy of Robert Weiss, M.D.



Before Tx



After one Affirm Tx

Photos courtesy of Emil Tanghetti, M.D.



Before Tx

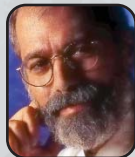


After Affirm Tx

“Virtually 100% of the time patients look better four to six months after their last treatment. I would say that improvement continues for up to 12 months.”

improvement occurs months after the final treatment. “Virtually 100% of the time patients look better four to six months after their last treatment. I would say that improvement continues for up to 12 months.” Like Dr. Weiss, Dr. Biesman noted a similar pattern in his patients.

Dermatologist Emil Tanghetti, M.D., medical director of the Center for Dermatology and Laser Surgery in Sacramento, California, U.S., has used the Affirm to treat photodamage and acne scars for seven months. “I continue to see improvement after the final of a series of four to six treatments,” he said. “I have patients with acne scars who are seven months out and are doing very well. Once you produce that collagen down in the papillary dermis, it’s there for a while.”



Emil Tanghetti, M.D.
Associate Professor UC Davis
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Laser Surgery
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Maintaining clinical benefits requires a good general skincare regimen also. The physicians recommend that their patients consider the regular use of moisturizers, sunscreen and topical vitamins A and C to maintain the improvements achieved by their laser treatments, which are a significant investment in time and money. Dr. Katz also suggested that patients avoid retinoids that may irritate the skin.

Results to date seem to be positive and consistent among patients of varying skin types. “Most skin types respond well,” explained Dr. Katz. Fitzpatrick skin types I through IV comprise the bulk of

patients treated by the doctors. “We’ve treated up to type V and not yet seen post-inflammatory pigmentation,” noted Dr. Weiss.

Drs. Katz and Biesman commented on adverse effects and their duration. According to Dr. Katz, patients have a little erythema and edema for a few hours after Affirm treatment. “Different levels of aggressiveness affect the duration of redness, but even when pushed to its limits, the Affirm produces only transient adverse effects. Dr. Biesman added, “Cold air during treatment helps with patient comfort while increasing treatment safety, and I ask patients to stop taking retinoids before treatment. Mild erythema and swelling for up to a day is nothing that would keep them from going to work.”



Before Tx



After Affirm Tx

Photos courtesy of Bruce Katz, M.D.

Overall, the patient base is happy and curious about treatment with Affirm, according to Dr. Tanghetti. “Patients are absolutely elated. The Affirm is probably the best modality for fractional resurfacing. I’ve had a few patients who’ve switched to the Affirm after treatment with other fractional modalities. While clinical photos show significant improvement of scars and wrinkles, patients

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Photos courtesy of Brian Biesman, M.D.



Scar before Tx



Scar after Affirm Tx

“The big differences between the Affirm and the other modalities are speed, because you treat the entire face in 15 to 20 minutes, and ease of use.”

regularly often note more subtle changes with their harshest critic: the mirror.”

The innovative nature of the Affirm is expected to significantly impact the aesthetic market. “The big differences between the Affirm and the other modalities are speed, because you treat the entire face in 15 to 20 minutes, and ease of use,” Dr. Tanghetti said. “These translate into results and affordability for more patients. Half of my laser nurse’s schedule is Affirm now. That’s as much as hair removal.”

Dr. Katz said the Affirm is “probably the best of the non-ablative modalities so far. “I think that collagen is stimulated during treatment and it seems to persist, so patients are happy. I’ve noticed a steady increase in my Affirm treatments, many due to referrals.”

The option of a quick procedure with minimal downtime and only mild, transient adverse effects is attractive to patients in the current climate, according to Dr. Weiss. “The Affirm is a big leap from the non-ablative devices of the past. The approach is more of what I see with the ablative lasers. The Affirm has a worldwide market, is safe and effective, and has opened up a whole new treatment alternative.”

In a new Affirm workstation, introduced at the 2007 annual meeting of the *American Academy of Dermatology* in

Washington, D.C., U.S., the 1440 nm laser is combined with a 1320 nm laser and Cynosure’s MultiPlex technology, permitting simultaneous treatment with both wavelengths timed to fire at a fixed interval between the two. “The 1320 nm laser uses the same microlens array to diffuse the laser light,” Dr. Weiss said. “This allows safer treatment with higher energies. And because the 1320 nm energy goes deeper into the tissue, it could give us additional skin tightening benefits.” Dr. Weiss, who has begun to evaluate the new Affirm with MultiPlex, added that his initial observations look positive. “It looks like we’re going to get faster, better results with this combination system because it allows us to do the two treatments virtually simultaneously.”

Drs. Biesman and Tanghetti are also optimistic about the new workstation’s potential. “The Affirm (with MultiPlex) sequentially emitting the 1320 nm laser energy and then the 1440 nm energy gives you a combination of fractional resurfacing toward the surface and then the deeper heating for skin tightening, which is a good idea,” Dr. Biesman explained. Dr. Tanghetti has also begun to evaluate the new Affirm workstation. “The beauty of it is that you can go deeper for a tightening effect. If we can find something that really does tighten the skin of necks, cheeks and abdomens, that would be great. The new Affirm workstation looks very positive.”



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