

Cosmetic Dermatology

Broadband skin-tightening device provides combination treatments

New technology, refined physician techniques employed to satisfy higher patient expectations

Quick read

A new module for the Harmony system combines broadband and intense pulsed light technologies provides effective skin-tightening treatments and works well in combination with nonsurgical treatments including botulinum toxin injections, fillers and radiofrequency skin tightening.



Dr. Bosniak

BY JOHN JESITUS
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Las Vegas — A versatile pulsed light device provides effective skin tightening for today's discriminating patients, according to Stephen Bosniak, M.D.

The Harmony laser (Alma Lasers) equipped with the Harmony ST module is unique because it joins eight modalities — of pulsed light, UVB, near infrared light, and five types of lasers — in one system, according to Dr. Bosniak, an attending surgeon at the Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital and a Manhattan-based ophthalmic plastic surgeon in private practice.

"Our patients now want it all, and their expectations are exceedingly high," he says.

In New York, Dr. Bosniak observes, "Even a 5-year-old can recognize a bad Botox (botulinum toxin, Allergan) treatment." When this treatment first became available, he says, "It was like magic, and not everyone knew about it. Now, everyone knows. And it can't be overdone — it must be perfect."

Newer noninvasive modalities

Similar expectations apply to newer noninvasive modalities for face tightening and lifting, Dr. Bosniak says.

"We must not only tighten and lift," he says, "but we must treat skin texture, pigmentation and broken capillaries at the same time." Therefore, he says that if there's a modality that tightens and lifts, "then we have to introduce a second modality to help with

the pigmentation and telangiectasias" to meet patient demands.

In his practice, he says he frequently combines the Harmony laser with nonsurgical treatments including botulinum toxin injections, fillers, radiofrequency (RF) skin tightening and photodynamic therapy.

"They all have their place when used together," Dr. Bosniak says.

Particular combination

He adds that he finds the Harmony system particularly useful in combination with the ThermoCool™ device (Thermage®) because pulsed light works on a more superficial level than does RF tightening.

"For example, after we've done a monopolar RF skin-tightening treatment with Thermage®, which is going to give some subcutaneous supportive tightening, then we can enhance the effects by going back and using the near infrared technology of the Harmony ST module. The combination works well," Dr. Bosniak says.

He always uses the ST handpiece in combination with the Harmony's 570 nm intense pulsed light (IPL) handpiece. Together, he says these technologies improve dyspigmentation, telangiectasias and superficial skin texture. Going back and doing multiple passes with the ST handpiece at the same sitting also provides skin tightening.

Specifically, Dr. Bosniak recommends performing one pass (over the face, neck and, perhaps, hands) with the 570 nm handpiece, followed by four passes with the ST broadband handpiece.

"What I find very positive about this technology is that the application of the ST handpiece involves no patient discomfort."

— Stephen Bosniak, M.D.
New York

“Then we repeat the procedure in three to four weeks. Usually we tell patients they’re going to need at least three or four treatments, and particularly with the ST handpiece, they probably need five or six to see the tightening effect.”

With the 570 nm handpiece, he adds that he starts with 10 J/cm², and he may go up as high as 15 or 16 J/cm² during subsequent sessions, increasing by increments of two J/cm². With the ST handpiece, he says he uses 35 J/cm² — the highest setting available.

Other caveats

“We don’t stack the pulses,” says Dr. Bosniak, who has treated approximately 50 patients with the IPL/broadband combination, “but I don’t do a pass on an entire side of the face and then start again.”

Rather, he says he’ll pick a linear vector, such as the area just above the jawline, and treat it four times in a row before proceeding to the next vector, eventually covering the entire face in a single session.

“What I find very positive about this technology is that the application of the ST handpiece involves no patient discomfort,” he says.

Conversely, he says the IPL handpiece creates slight stinging but no significant discomfort.

“We increase the power very gradually to reduce any possibilities of causing too much downtime. We can give a heavier treatment, and the patient can remain erythematous for a day or so, but that’s not the point of this particular protocol,” Dr. Bosniak says.

Patients’ role

Strategies in this area include sun avoidance, home skincare regimens and timely botulinum toxin treatments for managing dynamic rhytids and facial shaping, Dr. Bosniak explains.

“One of our protocols when doing monopolar RF skin tightening is the same protocol we use with the ST handpiece — one or two weeks before, we pretreat with Botox the muscles of the face, such as the depressor anguli oris, that pull things down,” so tightening treatments encounter less resistance, he says. Similarly, he says that preemptively relaxing the platysma increases tightening treatments’ efficacy.

“Our patients call this the BZ lift,” which is named for Dr. Bosniak and his business partner Marian Cantisano-Zilkha, M.D., he says. In this procedure, Dr. Bosniak says, “We pretreat the muscles that are pulling down the face. Then we may use monopolar RF skin tightening, and go back three or four weeks later and start using the near infrared ST handpiece to give some more superficial tightening as well. The combination gives some very impressive results.”

When a surgeon offers a nonsurgical procedure, Dr. Bosniak emphasizes, “We don’t want to lose our credibility with patients. We tell our patients this is not a one-visit treatment.” Rather, he says he attempts to establish long-term relationships with patients. For each of their new, unexpected and perhaps unpleasant changes as a result of aging, says Dr. Bosniak, “We want to be there to help them.” **DT**

Disclosure: Dr. Bosniak has been a consultant for Thermage® and Medicis. For more information: www.eye-lift.com • www.almalasers.com

© Reprinted from DERMATOLOGY TIMES, March 2006 AN ADVANSTAR PUBLICATION Printed in U.S.A.

Copyright Notice Copyright by Advanstar Communications Inc. Advanstar Communications Inc. retains all rights to this article. This article may only be viewed or printed (1) for personal use. User may not actively save any text or graphics/photos to local hard drives or duplicate this article in whole or in part, in any medium. Advanstar Communications Inc. home page is located at <http://www.advanstar.com>.



Alma Lasers®
Wellbeing Through Technology

United States

6555 NW 9th Avenue
Suite 303
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
Tel: (954) 229-2240
Fax: (954) 229-8310

Headquarters

7 Haeshel St., P.O.B 3021
Caesarea Industrial Park
Caesarea, Israel 38900
Tel: +972-4-627-5357
Fax: +972-4-627-5368

www.almalasers.com Email: contact@almalasers.com