

Considerations for Medical Laser Equipment Investments

Is Laser Therapy Right for Your Practice?

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In a changing healthcare landscape, new barriers to practice profitability and patient outcomes are emerging. Physicians seeking to increase revenue and maintain diminishing profit margins are considering laser therapy as a method to offer pain relief for non-surgical and post-surgical patients. Specialties like podiatry and orthopedics, in which fully 85% of the patients they see each day are non-surgical, benefit particularly from laser therapy, but incorporating any new technology warrants careful consideration.

This e-book will offer key considerations for determining whether laser therapy is well suited to your patient base and practice, and what to look for in selecting a laser system.

Why Laser Therapy?

Patient Pain Relief

- 85%-90% efficacy rate
- Typically 6-10 treatments
- Used for pain, inflammation, and edema
- Non-invasive, with no thermal damage

Practice Growth

- ROI after 2 patients/month
- Reduce risk and comply to emerging DEA controls on prescription pain medications
- Differentiate your practice while expanding your cash-based service offering

Therapeutic lasers differ from surgical or aesthetic lasers and have been cleared by the FDA for the treatment of pain, inflammation, and edema associated with the following conditions:

- Plantar Fasciitis
- Neuromas
- Neuropathies
- Arthritis
- Sports injuries
- Tendon & ligament injuries
- Back & joint pain
- Muscle sprains & strains
- Tendonitis
- Wounds
- Post-surgical swelling
- Disc disease



Laser therapy is used by thousands of physicians worldwide to alleviate pain, reduce inflammation, and restore mobility. Laser therapy increases the production of ATP, increases the cell wall membrane permeability, and increases circulation and supply of oxygen and nutrients. But is laser therapy right for your practice?

In considering the addition of laser therapy to your practice, you'll need to determine:

- Do your patient demographics suggest a demand for laser therapy? As Baby Boomers age, we will see twice the population of Americans over age 65 by 2030, with the associated presenting symptoms common with age.
- Do you have the staffing in place? Laser therapy opens up a new line of revenue. From physician time to outline protocols and develop clinic pathways, training to identify good candidates, and technicians to conduct treatments, plan ahead for resource needs.
- Does your state require a physician in attendance? If so, consider robotic lasers, which will reduce active physician time needed.
- Do you know the value proposition? As high deductible plans, HSAs, and FSAs grow in popularity, patients take on a consumer mindset.
- Which patients are good candidates for laser therapy? Create standards for patient screening to minimize risk and improve patient outcomes.
- How will you educate patients? Determine how you'll market laser therapy services, and what support you'll receive from the laser equipment supplier.
- How will you measure success? What are your goals? Consider meeting after 10-20 procedures to review screening processes and procedures.

If laser therapy is a good fit for your practice, it's time to select a laser system. FDA-cleared therapy lasers are classified as Class III and Class IV. Class III lasers (<500 mW) are often referred to as “cold” lasers and have limited penetration and effectiveness for deep-seated pathologies. These lasers have a preferred safety profile over Class IV high powered lasers as they do not produce any collateral tissue damage. Class IV lasers are higher-powered (>500 mW) and have been proven to have improved efficacy and efficiency when compared to Class III devices. In addition, the treatment times are significantly shorter allowing for greater patient throughput.

MLS Laser Therapy, with its unique combination of high peak power and short pulse durations, is often said to be in a class by itself. It is the only Class IV laser that generates heat, with the safety of a Class III system, with no chance of collateral tissue damage. This is achieved through the unique and patented pulse pattern.

Types of Laser Therapy Systems

Because the FDA does not technically ‘approve’ lasers, but does regulate laser medical devices, there is a lot of confusion in the market. Lasers are registered with the FDA for safety—as determined by potential for risk to the human eye at 20 cm. Lasers are classified according to safety and type, not application.

Let's take a simplified look at those classes:

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3a	Class 3b	Class 4
Eye safe regardless of length of exposure Ex: bar code scanner	Low power visible light <1 mW Ex: laser pointers and range finders	Continuous wave laser Do not aim at eyes 1-5 mW Ex: laser scanners	Low power with limited depth of penetration <500 mW	>500 mW Improved depth of penetration Protective eyewear needs to be worn

Source:

<https://www.practicalpainmanagement.com/treatments/complementary/lasers/class-iv-therapy-lasers-maximize-primary-biostimulative-effects>
<https://www.practicalpainmanagement.com/treatments/complementary/lasers/introducing-low-level-laser-therapy-pain-management>

Therapy lasers can be Class 3a, 3b or 4, and vary by power and penetration depth. Let's take a closer look:

Low Level Laser Therapy (LLLT), or Class III (IIIa or IIIb)

- Also called cold laser therapy or photobiomodulation therapy
- Shown to be effective for myofascial pain, carpal tunnel
- Power output lower than .5 watts (500 mW)
- Visible red and near-IR lasers

Class IV Therapy Laser

- Produces a primary biostimulative effect on deeper tissues
- FDA approved for relief of muscle and joint aches, pain and stiffness, muscle and muscle spasm relaxation, temporary increase in local blood circulation, and relief of pain and stiffness associated with arthritis
- Power output higher than .5 watts (500 mW)
- Typical depth of penetration of 4 cm or more, with secondary and tertiary photobiomodulation effects at a greater depth
- Typical spot treatment area of .8 to 5 cm²





Conclusion

Laser therapy can provide a significant competitive differentiator and revenue stream when considered, selected, and implemented with your patient and practice needs in mind. Cutting Edge Laser Technologies provides the only Class 4 therapy laser with a robotic delivery system, no chance of collateral damage, and a proven implementation process designed to quickly provide a return on the equipment investment.

Request a Demo

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