

Injection-free, pain-free dentistry now in South Africa

The revolutionary Biolase laser technology is now available in South Africa, providing consumers with injection-free and pain-free dentistry. It is safe for children, the elderly, special needs individuals, chemotherapy patients and pregnant women.



Dr Nco Verloop with a young patient.

The main reason most people dread visiting the dentist is because of the anticipated pain and discomfort. Finally, there is a legitimate alternative. Laser dental technology provides injection-free and pain-free dentistry for many procedures including fillings, root canals, implant surgery, gum disease, teeth whitening, smile design, paediatric tongue tie surgery and many other procedures.

Distributed by SciVision South Africa, the Californian-based Biolase WaterLase iPlus Dental Laser, as well as the Biolase EPIC Laser, presents a cutting-edge alternative to traditional dentistry that can painlessly eliminate the most dreaded aspect of going to the dentist - injections, drills and sedation. Biolase laser technologies are rapidly changing the way people view and experience dentistry.

Peter Doubell, SciVision CEO explains, "When using this dental technology, there is no friction and heat caused by traditional drilling, hence many procedures can now be done painlessly with no anaesthetic, enabling patients to leave the dentist's room without any numbing or hindering side effects. WaterLase technology is extremely versatile and is able to treat both hard and soft tissue. Because WaterLase dentistry requires less to no anaesthesia, (therefore no injections), multiple procedures can be done simultaneously on different quadrants of the mouth - eliminating multiple appointments. Its non-contact method guarantees mostly painless procedures. The Biolase laser technology is literally taking the fear factor out of dentistry."

According to SciVision, patients will experience little to no pain or discomfort during or after laser dentistry procedures. Dentistry and surgery is faster with better recovery, no swelling, bruising, antibiotics or painkillers needed in most cases. With the new technology, patients' treatment is done in less time with no facial numbness when going back to the office or school.

Pretoria East's Dr Nico Verloop, the first dentist in South Africa to use the Biolase Waterlase iPlus believes that there are many important benefits associated with WaterLase dentistry. "Standard mechanical dentistry is often accompanied by fear and pain by the patient. Although pain may be reduced by local anaesthesia, fear of the needle, noise, and vibration of the tools cause discomfort for many patients. With WaterLase, for the first time many common dental procedures can be performed without local anaesthesia. WaterLase allows the clinician to do dental work unobtrusively, while reducing bacteria."

Dr Sam Thandar, Johannesburg's first dentist to use the new laser already treats numerous patients. Laurence van Niekerk, a patient, comments, "The anxiety before the procedure was worse than the actual procedure. There was no injection and no pain. There was no drilling or vibration, just a faint popping sound and fine water spray, which felt a bit cold, but that's all."

Dr Thandar explains, "The most common comment from patients after having laser dentistry is 'Wow, is that it?' Children immediately like the laser, as it makes no drilling sound and its painkilling ability is welcomed. Nowadays it is very rare when a WaterLase dentist has to give an injection to a child. Why should children and adults suffer through painful and distressing procedures when there is a quick and painless solution available?

Laser dentistry treatments are virtually painless, cause minimum bleeding and swelling, are less invasive and allow for the preservation of healthier tooth structure during cavity removal. Very importantly, it also helps remove the fear of going to the dentist as there is less need for drills, scalpels and injections. WaterLase is also one of the only effective treatments for deteriorating implants."

How it works

The machine sprays a mixture of air, water and laser energy through a special hand piece. The laser energy causes tiny water molecules to heat and explode, cleaning away diseased tissue directly under the laser light. Dr Thandar adds, "In essence the water molecules and laser energy stream cut the tissue or tooth, literally vaporising the decay. A popping sound can be heard when the water molecules pop open. There is no heat, vibration or pressure. The water then cools down the tooth surface, bone or tissue being worked on. The hand piece never comes into contact with the body."

The laser energy is emitted from the hand piece with the tip held just millimetres away from the tooth or tissue. Because there is no bleeding and almost no post-operative pain or swelling when using laser dentistry, it now replaces much of the surgical work traditionally done with a scalpel.

Doubell concludes, "Biolase products increase patient treatment acceptance, allows for early disease detection and intervention, promotes health and reduces anxiety and expenditure. We are seeing our laser education efforts starting to bear fruit as more and more dentists realise the benefits of acquiring the systems in bringing pain-free, innovative dentistry to the patient. It is an exciting time for the evolution of dentistry in South Africa and we're proud to be part of making this leading technology available locally."

What does it cost?

As there are no specific medical costing laser codes, patients simply pay according to the regular procedure code. The medical aids pay for, or towards certain procedures - whether they done with traditional tools or the hi-tech laser. Each practice will have its own fee structure for specific procedures, but in most cases, it will be similar to the fee that would have been applicable with traditional tools such as scalpel blades, drills and sutures. Furthermore, not all lasers are the same, therefore be sure to look for a certified Biolase laser dentist.

To view the CNBC video, go to <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=kVTORZbZyk4>. For more information, go to www.scivision.co.za.

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