

The Right Target

BY NICOLE WOODS

Hoya ConBio's RevLite laser removes tattoos with little chance of scarring. Dr. Tattoff's laser physician shares insights on using RevLite for safe, effective tattoo removal.

For some people, a tattoo can mark a rite of passage, remind them of a loved one or showcase their individuality. Although many love their body art, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) estimates that 8 million Americans regret having their tattoos.

This number represents a huge, potential patient population for physicians who want to offer tattoo removal services. The Hoya ConBio RevLite® (EO Q-Switched Nd:YAG) is a practical choice because it's safe for all skin types. The RevLite offers increased power and efficiency on the same platform as Hoya's MedLite® C series, which many physicians have dubbed "workhorse" lasers.

The RevLite's electro-optic Q-switched technology generates an output beam with shorter pulses by storing energy between each pulse. Its Q-switch acts as a high-speed shutter, producing a peak power output of 200 megawatts in a 5-20 nanosecond pulse width. The RevLite improves upon

this PhotoAcoustic action with a unique pulse dispersion that adds a subtle photo-thermal effect. This dual effect is called PhotoAcoustic Technology Pulse™ (PTP).

PTP disperses peak energy at narrow pulse widths and larger spot sizes, harnessing 60 percent more power than previous Hoya ConBio lasers. This combination of high peak power and nanosecond pulse durations forces energy into target molecules with such power that they vibrate and shatter.

Because PTP limits the tissue's exposure to thermal build-up, the RevLite can treat the skin with no scarring or need for cooling. Physicians can target tattoo ink in the skin without damaging the surrounding tissue. After the tattoo ink is broken into tiny particles, the body removes it through phagocytosis.

Breaking Inks Down

The RevLite offers four wavelengths to target different ink colors. Its primary 1064 nm wavelength best removes dark and black ink. It can be frequency-doubled to produce a 532 nm wavelength, which removes red, orange and some yellow ink. MultiLite dye-impregnated polymer rod handpieces can convert the 532 nm to 585 nm to remove sky blue and some purple ink, or to 650 nm to remove green ink.

Because a longer wavelength decreases competition from the melanin in the epidermis, the 1064 nm is the safest wavelength for patients with Type V or Type VI skin types. However, more treatments may be required at lower energies to reduce potential complications, and it may be difficult to remove certain colors from dark skin.

Amateur tattoos often require four or more sessions for removal. Professional tattoos typically require six to eight sessions because they contain more colors and penetrate the skin more deeply. Treatments must be spaced four to eight weeks apart to limit injury and scarring.

Will Kirby, DO, is board-certified in dermatology with practices in Beverly Hills and Anaheim Hills, Calif. He currently appears on E! Entertainment Television's "Dr. 90210," and has been using Hoya lasers for tattoo removal since the launch of the MedLite C series more than six years ago.

Dr. Kirby believes physicians incorrectly think that only gang members and bikers want tattoo removal services. "The truth is, people from Bel-Air who come in to have their lips augmented are the same patients who want tattoos removed," he says.

Dr. Kirby's assessment matches Hoya ConBio's patient profile: The average tattoo removal customer is a woman between 28 and 35. Therefore, many physicians can build a tattoo removal clientele by marketing directly to their existing medical aesthetics patients.

When it comes to tattoo removal, patients need to have realistic expectations. Physicians should explain that the process may take well over a year from start to finish, and may not result in total erasure. With the RevLite, however, shadow tattoos are "very minimal" and the chance for scarring is "exceedingly low," says Dr. Kirby.

The RevLite is a good investment for aesthetic medical practices of any size. In addition to multicolored tattoo removal, it's FDA-cleared to reduce wrinkles and acne scars; treat pigmented and vascular lesions; and remove hair—indicating that the RevLite continues in the tradition of Hoya's "workhorse" lasers.

NICOLE WOODS is assistant editor of *Healthy Aging*.



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THE REVLITE has helped Will Kirby, DO, perform tattoo removal procedures more easily and with better results.

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