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Lasers – Are they for me?

Sunlight is the source of energy to us. It forms the root of all food products, solar panel systems and LASERs too. Negroes in the deep Amazon forests are able to remove intracranial tumors under the blazing sun, without any infection. The developing countries are still striving for a clean & sterile operation theatre to perform a perfect neurosurgery. Human kind's fascination with the properties of light and its applications in medicine can be traced to ancient times. Development in physics at the beginning of the twentieth century laid the foundation for laser theory postulated by Albert Einstein¹. LASER is an acronym for "Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation". It was demonstrated by Maiman for the first time in 1960. Fifty odd years down the lane, it did not receive the importance it should have - in the field of dentistry and healthcare. The reason could be attributed to the fact that the dentist has to relearn things that he/she has already learnt in the dental school to perfection, almost. The cutting of enamel and dentin without the tactile feedback of the diamond bur and the precise cut of soft tissues with a gentle sweep of the laser handpiece instead of the surgical blade – are some of the things that are to be mastered. This presentation tries to introduce the learner to the world of Lasers, their basic properties, interaction with different types of tissues, pumping methods and different types of lasers available for dental use.

Biography

Rajanikanth K is a Senior Professor, Fellowship supervisor & Post graduate teacher in Oral & Maxillofacial surgery in Datta Meghe Institute of Medical Sciences, Deemed-to-be University, Nagpur, India. He has a teaching experience of 14 years with 5 years as the Chief of the Unit. His area of expertise is Maxillofacial trauma, Cleft surgery, Distraction Osteogenesis, LASERs and Dental Implants. He has 15 publications to his name of which, 8 are international. He attended more than 35 conferences and delivered 16 scientific presentations. He is also actively involved in organization of 13 regional & 3 national conferences.

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