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An interview with Macedonian Professor Ana Minovska

In a recent interview with Prof. Ana Minovska, DDS, PhD of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, General Stomatology University "Goce Delcev" Stip, R. Macedonia. Prof. Minovska talked about the Er:YAG-laser assisted periodontal dental treatments and the importance and benefits of laser based treatments.



Professor Ana Minovska

_laser: *Please tell us about your clinical daily routine and patients.*

Besides being a professor at the Faculty of Medical Sciences, I also manage a dental clinic, which provides our patients with comprehensive oral health care. We incorporated laser technology early on in order to realise the idea to shift from mechanical generated technology to a light-generated practice. The process of shifting our clinical work to laser energy took a couple of years to implement, but today, all general practitioners at my clinic are using the Er:YAG dental laser to perform a wide range of dental procedures. Most patients are not aware of the numerous benefits of laser dentistry, so we make sure to inform them. Once they become aware of the unique benefits they stop avoiding routine check-ups.

What are the most popular procedures performed at the clinic? At ETERNAdent, we conduct general oral care, but are best known for periodontal procedures. Just like everywhere in the world, in Macedonia too, there is a growing need for periodontal treatments and surgery. We have incorporated the Er:YAG (2,940 nm) laser at our clinic because of its unique clinical benefits, which include bactericidal effect, which eliminates most of the existing bacteria, its homeostasis ability for better healing, its ability to selectively ablate granulation tissue, soft tissue surgery, and many others. We also provide our patients with treatments in restorative dentistry, oral surgery, cavity preparations, implantology, prosthodontics and cosmetic dentistry. My team consists of professional dentists all of whom implement the Er:YAG laser in most of their procedures.

_*Please share with us highlights of your academic career.*

I have been part of the academic world for the past 31 years. So I have vast experience working with students and in a variety of research fields. During my career as a professor at the Faculty of Dentistry at University Ss Cyril and Methodius of Skopje, I held various positions, including Director of Clinical Research and Deputy Dean of Dental Medicine. I also founded the School of Oral Hygiene programme, which is now an integral part of the Faculty of Dentistry at University Ss Cyril and Methodius of Skopje.

Throughout the years, I did a lot of dentistry-related work, but in recent years have been spending my

time on research, mainly focused on the clinical benefits of laser energy on the human body and oral health. In one case we conducted a scientific comparison of laser-assisted bleaching vs. the conventional plasma arc light accelerated bleaching method. In another research we found the use of Er:YAG advantageous for desensitisation of sensitive cervical areas, treatment of herpes simplex, perculectomy and other issues. Features like minimal invasiveness, bio-stimulation and growth factors generation are extremely important in achieving better clinical results, and it is fascinating to see that the Er:YAG laser has so many virtues.

_Prof. Minovska, based on your experience, how do you see the future of laser dentistry?

The use of Er:YAG laser technology is growing very quickly. However, with regards to dentistry, I believe that we need a laser that can be used by general dentistry. We need a laser wavelength that can be used in the treatment of soft and hard oral tissues and for a wide variety of purposes. The dental laser should be able to fulfil all the requirements of conservative dentistry or the mechanical approach for performing everyday dentistry. Now that research has demonstrated that Er:YAG is the ideal wavelength, there is a growing number of experts gaining substantial experience and who are strong supporters of the technology. It is clear that traditional dentistry must change, just as laser has become an integral tool in eyes and ENT surgeries. I am sure the same will happen in dentistry. Personally, I prefer Er:YAG, as it allows me to provide my patients with better clinical results and service. I have also worked with diodes and Nd:YAG, but I can tell you that I will be sticking to Er:YAG because it can be used in such a variety of dental fields.

_What kind of dental lasers do you use at your clinic and for which treatment?

At my clinic, I have two lasers: a Fotona laser and the LiteTouch from Syneron Dental Lasers. These two give me a combination of Er:YAG and Nd:YAG. Both these lasers are very good and I can use either one of them to perform similar treatments. However, their technological concept is very different. The LiteTouch is easy to use thanks to its unique Laser-in-the-handpiece™ technology, which allows me freehand movement. I also like the fact that it is small and can easily fit anywhere in the clinic. Its friendly shape and the fact that it's very quiet (doesn't make a mosquito sound) turns it into a "fear buster", allowing me and my team to calm patients before treatment.

_What do you feel should be the role of the academia in the introduction of laser dentistry?

The first step is for dentists to become more familiar with laser dentistry and gain a deeper understanding of the vast treatment abilities of the laser light. I believe this is in the hands of academic institutions—they must take responsibility for exposing new discoveries and technologies to future generation practitioners. This particular technology allows us to use the energy of light we use every day also in the field of dentistry. Ultimately, I wish for laser education to be completely integrated within the school of dentistry, everywhere. I am currently the President of ETERNITAS, The Macedonian Society of Oral Laser Applications, and we have committed to broadening and spreading the knowledge of lasers.

_What was the theme of the congress held in Skopje and how did it contribute to the promotion of laser dentistry in the region?

As organisers of the 18th congress, we promoted the idea of implementing, positioning and establishing laser dentistry education. This area is very new not only in Balkan countries, but to the rest of Europe's dental professionals. I believe that at this Congress, laser dentistry was brought closer than ever before to traditional dentistry, and dentists were able to see for themselves that everything that can be done in traditional dentistry can also be realised with a brand new instrument that happens to use laser technology.

The association of dentists, ETERNITAS, received the great honour of organising this year's congress in Macedonia. The congress took place from 23 to 25 April at the Hotel Aleksandar Palace in Skopje, with more than 400 dentists from the region actively participating. The theme of the Congress was "Where the Future of Dentistry Stands", and we had a series of excellent lectures on laser dentistry by top professionals in the field, including: Prof. Adam Stabholtz and Dr Sharonit Sahar-Helft both from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Prof. Jean Paul Roca from the University of Nice, and Dr Avi Reyhanian, an outstanding Israeli practitioner who shared his experience of working with the Syneron Dental Lasers device.

We hope that the congress demonstrated our great enthusiasm of modern dentistry and we hope that we were able to demonstrate why laser dentistry, as a field, is beneficial to both the patients and the dentists, and should be practiced much more intensely._

_contact laser

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