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Exploring the Benefits of Laser Dentistry

ONE OF THE NEWEST and most advanced technologies available in dentistry is the use of lasers. As a strong supporter of laser dentistry, and Fellow in the World Clinical Laser Institute (WCLI), Dr. Richard Weigand recognizes the benefits.

There are four main types of lasers that Dr. Weigand uses in the pursuit of excellent care for his patients; laser cavity detector, Waterlase, Diode laser, and a curing laser used in bonding. Each plays a unique role in the dental process.

The use of lasers tends to be safer than traditional methods as it eliminates the use of drills on the teeth, which reduces the possibility of microcracking of the enamel. Additionally, laser dentistry tends to be more conservative than traditional methods, resulting in a virtually pain-free experience. In the long run, laser dentistry saves both time and money by catching problems before they spread, fixing them in a less invasive way, and eliminating the number of trips to the dentist.

The laser cavity detector locates cavities years before they would be discovered in a traditional dental exam. Dr. Weigand is then able to repair them without needles or drills by using the Waterlase Dental Laser.

Created by Biolase, the Waterlase uses a process that gently washes away decay with laser-energized droplets of



water. The laser gently and precisely removes a wide range of human tissue including tooth enamel (the hardest substance in the body), and soft gum tissue with no heat and little or no discomfort. This is the only FDA approved laser on the market. “This will revolutionize children’s dentistry,” says Dr. Weigand. “Can you imagine having dental treatment without needles and drills?” The result is less dental work and less cost.

For those patients who must endure the trials of soft tissue (gum) work, the Diode Laser is a very effective instrument to treat a wide range of problems. Not only can the laser remove diseased gum tissue with no stitches and much less pain, but it also sterilizes gum pockets. Deep inside these gum pockets exist bacteria that resist traditional treatment. With the laser, low levels of energy are used to kill these bacteria—in effect decontaminating the pockets. The procedure is “very comfortable, and the healing is unbelievable,” says Dr. Weigand. A curing laser is

used to assist in the bonding process on dental work. “It bonds effectively and with as strong a bond as anything on the market,” says Dr. Weigand.

“Dentistry is changing and moving all the time,” he says, explaining the need to continuously increase knowledge. In addition to attending classes, Dr. Weigand lectures for Biolase, helping to teach other dentists the benefits of laser dentistry, and letting them see, first hand, the possibilities for their patients. He is a Fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD), and a Washington State Representative to the American Board of Family Dentistry (ABFD), in addition to holding certifications from many dental organizations.

“I constantly have to sharpen the sword,” he says. “For me, that is technology. It is an investment in money and an investment in time to stay up to speed with changing technology.” Sharpening his sword also means Dr. Weigand is at the top of his game when it comes to cosmetic dentistry.