NightLase™ – Laser-Assisted Snoring and Apnea Reduction, 9 Months of Experience

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ABSTRACT

Er:YAG lasers are very popular in dentistry and aesthetics. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the ability of an Er:YAG laser to perform tightening of the uvula, soft palate and surrounding tissues with a patterned laser beam using non-ablative parameters to reduce snoring and sleep apnea.

21 patients between 26 – 59 years of age were treated with an Er:YAG laser (Fidelis PlusIII d, Fotona, Slovenia). Every patient was treated three times (at 1, 15, and 45 days). A specially patterned laser beam was used at minimally invasive settings and the laser beam was repetitively fired at soft intraoral tissue. The beam was manually delivered across the target, either vertically or horizontally (depending on the region), with 8 basic passes performed across each region, followed by 4 additional "strengthening" passes. The treated tissue is thermally processed and consequently shrinks.

None of the treated patients have shown any pain or discomfort during the treatment. Evaluations of the results were made via subjective assessment of the patient's answers to a questionnaire. Patients evaluated the average snoring reduction after the first session at between 30-60% (on average around 43%) and after the second session at between 50-90% (average 62%). Improvement in the total score of the questionnaire after Tx1 was on average also around 45%, but with a larger range (12-94%), while after Tx2 it was around 68% (28-96%).

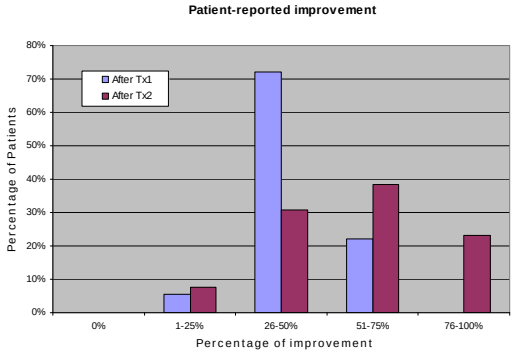

Fig. 1: Snoring reduction – results of NightLase™ therapy as reported by patients through the questionnaire.

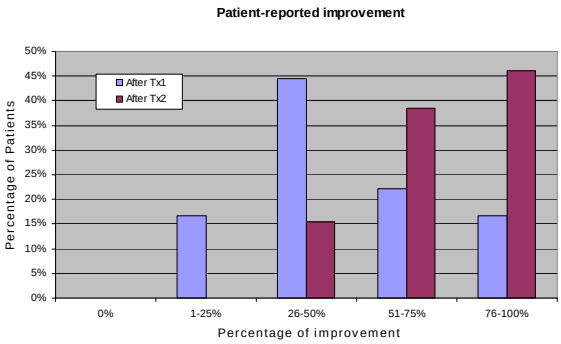

Fig. 2: Results of overall sleep improvement.

NightLase™ is a safe and efficacious method for significant snoring and apnea reduction. It is a minimally invasive method with no need for special preparation or post-op therapy. The procedure is tolerable by all patients and doesn't require any anesthesia. It is quick and easy to perform, with no consumables. It is a "walk-in, walk-out" procedure which doesn't require a sterile operating environment.

Adding another indication for snoring and apnea reduction in the indication range of these lasers would be beneficial to dentists and users of aesthetic lasers.