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Dental Laser Quick Poll Results

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How are dental lasers used for periodontal therapy?

Dental lasers are a therapeutic option of increasing interest to practitioners. However, their role in periodontal therapy remains controversial. There are many strategies and types of dental lasers advocated for this purpose. In the network's second Quick Poll Survey, Dr. Griselle Ortiz from Vandalia, Ohio and a workgroup interested in Laser-assisted periodontal therapy, wanted to better understand laser use by network members.

The survey had 434 responses, with more than one-third (37%) reporting using lasers as part of periodontal therapy. Of the dentists who reported using lasers, 80% of whom are general dentists, most (62%) use it less than once per week for periodontal care, and only 7% use it more than 5 times per week for periodontal care. The types of laser-supported services provided (% of users) included:

- pocket disinfection (54%)
- non-surgical periodontal therapy (52%)
- adjunct to scaling and root planing (46%)
- surgical periodontal therapy (32%)
- management of peri-implantitis (25%)
- low-level laser therapy (23%)
- other periodontal procedures (23%)

Among those who use a dental laser, a diode laser was the most common (79%), followed by Nd:YAG (13%) and ErCr:YSGG (10%).

This survey had a high level of response for a Quick Poll, including 191 open-ended comments, suggesting that network practitioners are interested in the use of lasers for periodontal therapy. This survey provides insights for the Laser Protocol Development Workgroup as they address the question of laser efficacy in periodontal therapy through the National Dental PBRN.

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