

Exilis Delivers Focused RF Energy with Precision and Control

By Bob Kronemyer, Associate Editor

Radiofrequency (RF) energy for tissue tightening, body contouring and wrinkle reduction has been intelligently engineered into one unit offering more precise delivery of powerful thermal energy at a deeper depth. Exilis from BTL Industries, Inc. (Columbia, S.C.), also incorporates an advanced thermoelectric cooling system for extremely safe treatments that are non-invasive alternatives to traditional face-lifts and liposuction.



Sue Ellen Cox, M.D.
Owner
Aesthetic Solutions
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University of North Carolina
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"*In vivo* studies demonstrate that Exilis can penetrate 2 cm (20 mm) into the fat layer for effective body shaping," reported Sue Ellen Cox, M.D., owner of Aesthetic Solutions and clinical professor of dermatology at the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill, N.C.). "Exilis is more like a laser because you can refine the delivery of heat, whereas other RF devices rely on a standard depth. Exilis allows you to adjust the depth and focus the energy to customize treatments to the needs of your patients."

Exilis features two handpieces (one for wrinkles and facial tightening, the other for body tightening and contouring), delivering synchronized pulsed energy, "for precisely defining your superficial heating," Dr. Cox said. "Basically, for shaping, the more you cool the skin, the deeper you can penetrate the fat. The focused energy also thermally disrupts the collagen fibers by heating the tissue to between 40° C and 42.5° C. This causes some uncoiling of the collagen for a tightening effect."

Dr. Cox uses Exilis mostly for tissue tightening, primarily on the lower face. Patients 50 years and younger schedule four treatment sessions, 10 to 14 days apart, while older patients may require five to six sessions. It takes approximately 30 minutes to treat both sides of the face. "There is a deep heat sensation over the preauricular bone," Dr. Cox noted. "Other than that, treatment is not painful."

Results are very patient-dependent, according to Dr. Cox, but mild tissue tightening can be expected. "This is not a face-lift," she said. Patients achieve optimal results one to two months following their final treatment. Dr. Cox also recommends a single maintenance session at

six months. "However, European studies show that results can last up to 18 months."

Dr. Cox also treats the abdomen for both tissue tightening and fat reduction, in four to six sessions, spaced approximately ten days apart, with each session lasting about 20 minutes. "Again, there is modest but measurable improvement," Dr. Cox reported. "These are not liposuction results." Other parts of the body treated for body contouring are the back, lower arms and inner and outer thighs. "One patient told me that her arms used to jiggle at the gym when doing arm weights, but now this no longer occurs. The skin is tauter," said Dr. Cox.



Mary Lupo, M.D.
Dermatologist
New Orleans, LA

"This is the first RF device that makes sense for my practice," said Mary Lupo, M.D., a dermatologist from New Orleans, La. "Compared to other RF devices, I have achieved more improvement. The cost to the patient is also less than half, considering the price of the disposables with other RF devices."



Abdominal laxity before Tx



Abdominal laxity after four Exilis treatments

Photos courtesy of Jeanine Downie, M.D.

When investing in a technology, Dr. Lupo insists it be advantageous as a business model, as well as safe and effective for patients. "Exilis fits the bill for my practice," she stated. "I find it safe and tolerable for the patients." Since acquiring Exilis in December, "I have never had any technology in my office that has been as popular. For me, this is RF redefined."

Changing the handpiece, "focuses the energy at the depth we desire," said Dr. Lupo, noting that a penetration of about 2 cm allows for "meaningful fat reduction." In addition, the advanced cooling system prevents burns, and real-time temperature monitoring, "allows us to take a quick read if the patient says they are becoming uncomfortable. It's always beneficial to know where you are, not just subjectively, but objectively, with the delivery of the energy."

Like most other physicians, Dr. Lupo uses Exilis for both skin tightening alone and in conjunction with fat reduction. For just skin tightening, Dr. Lupo primarily treats the face and the neck, for which patients agree to four sessions, once every two weeks. "If we are treating just around the eyes, treatment is less than 15 minutes," she said. "But an entire face takes between 30 to 40 minutes." Some patient discomfort occurs, "when you are directly over bone," she said.



Posterior bra area before Tx



Posterior bra area after four Exilis treatments

Photos courtesy of Jeanine Downie, M.D.

Patients can expect a 10% to 40% improvement in the appearance of the tightening. "Every patient of mine has been happy with the treatment," Dr. Lupo conveyed. "They

all feel they have achieved some degree of tightening and textural improvement of the face."

For combination therapy, Dr. Lupo mostly treats the abdomen, love handles and arms. After four sessions (once every two weeks), results vary, depending on the level of severity. "For a very mild defect, like a very distinct tummy pooch, we are seeing more than 50% improvement," Dr. Lupo said. "For those who need, but refuse liposuction, about 10% to 20% improvement is realistic."



Patricia Farris, M.D.
Dermatologist
Metairie, LA

Other than treating the inner arm of women, "which tends to be slightly painful, patients say treatment is almost relaxing because it feels like a very deep heating, almost like a stone massage," Dr. Lupo said. Patients are also re-evaluated after the first series of treatments. "Typically, patients begin with one area, then sign on for a second series of four treatments in another area because they are happy with the results of the first area," she said. "Our greatest challenge has been accommodating the demand."

With Exilis, Patricia Farris, M.D., a dermatologist from Metairie, La. is able to add body contouring to her practice. Unlike previous devices, "Exilis is reasonably priced and there are no expensive consumables. Patients can receive treatment at what I consider affordable prices," she advised.

Saddlebags, love handles, tummies, arms and thighs are the most popular areas that Dr. Farris treats for body contouring with Exilis. Initially, patients commit to four to six sessions, every two to three weeks, with each session lasting about 30 minutes. "The handpiece is temperature-controlled, so as you increase the temperature to the recommended level the patient begins to feel warmth building up," explained Dr. Farris, who usually treats at around 40° C.

"Patients who have completed four treatments are by and large happy with the results," Dr. Farris said. "However, increasing our treatment times from four to eight minutes per area has provided better efficacy." A separate pass is sometimes incorporated for tissue tightening.

Furthermore, the thermoelectric cooling feature of Exilis has over 20 settings, from 10° C to 30° C, and off, to facilitate the depth of penetration and protect the skin. "Once you understand Exilis technology and how to balance RF power and surface cooling, you can customize the delivery of thermal energy to any depth desired," Dr. Farris concluded.