

Exilis Platform Offers Array of Options for Aesthetic Practices

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Submental region before Tx



Submental region after four Exilis treatments
Photos courtesy of Robert Weiss, M.D.

Radiofrequency for body contouring, skin laxity and skin tightening has taken a major leap forward with Exilis from BTL Aesthetics, Inc. (Columbia, S.C.). This radiofrequency (RF) device has the unique ability to safely deliver controlled thermal energy to many different targets in the skin and body for effective and safe treatment with minimal patient discomfort and no downtime.

Treatment time is also reduced because the Energy Flow Control (EFC) component delivers the maximum thermal effect to tissue while allowing the operator unparalleled visual control and flexibility due to real-time monitoring of skin temperature. Moreover, the advanced cooling system allows the dermis, deep dermis, subdermis and deep tissue to all be targeted. Skin burns are also prevented by a unique feature that immediately turns the power off if the handpiece loses contact with skin. When you consider its versatility and lack of costly consumables, Exilis becomes an affordable treatment option appealing to a wide-range of patients.

"For those practices that have used RF, Exilis is different," said Robert Weiss, M.D., an associate professor of dermatology at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine (Hunt Valley, Md.). "The treatment tip is constantly moving and the treatment itself is actually pleasant and relatively quick. Patient satisfaction is also high and you can offer treatments to patients that are unable to afford some of the pricier devices with expensive consumables. Exilis is an excellent alternative. You have more control. You're not confined to a fixed pattern."

Patients achieve skin smoothing and skin tightening, according to Dr. Weiss. Candidates for facial treatment are typically those in their 40s through 60s

experiencing some sagging of the skin around the jowls, or wrinkles around the eyes. The system has also shown "very nice results" for the abdomen in patients with lax skin (e.g., post-lipo-suction, post-pregnancy)," Dr. Weiss noted. Thighs have also responded favorably, "with improvement in saggy skin." A third area with noticeable results is the upper arm and shoulder – particularly women in their 40s and 50s. "These women start to notice that they don't like the way their arms look in short sleeves because of some sagging skin," Dr. Weiss said.

For full-face treatment, most patients require three to four sessions of about 15 to 30 minutes each, spaced two to three weeks apart. Following a series of treatments, patients should "see a noticeable improvement in skin tone, texture and laxity," Dr. Weiss conveyed. The number of sessions for off-the-face areas is basically the same, depending on the patient's needs. "Again, there is a noticeable improvement in contour, skin texture and folds."

Dr. Weiss, who is director of the Maryland Laser, Skin and Vein Institute in Hunt Valley, Md., appreciates that "Exilis is unique in delivering monopolar RF with a grounding pad, so we know it is penetrating deeply." The built-in temperature sensor also allows for the skin temperature to be maintained between 40° and 42° C. "This permits delivery of enough energy to cause skin tightening and contour changes, without causing pain," Dr. Weiss explained. "People feel a heat sensation – similar to a very warm massage." No local or topical anesthesia is needed.

Exilis is extremely user-friendly and has preset parameters according to the area being treated. "Besides suggested

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57 year old patient before Tx



57 year old patient one month after four Exilis treatments
Photos courtesy of David B. Vasily, M.D.

starting energy, the device itself has a small database program for entering patient information and keeping track of their energy levels and dates of treatment,” Dr. Weiss said. A touch screen also provides instructions on usage and proposed energy levels for various treatments.

“Usually by the second treatment, we begin to notice results,” Dr. Weiss reported. “Within one month after the last treatment, the most significant improvement typically occurs. Based on our knowledge of similar technologies using RF, we anticipate results will last one to two years.”

Furthermore, since the only consumable is an inexpensive single-use, disposable grounding pad, coupled with the rapid delivery of energy, treatment prices “are very reasonable,” Dr. Weiss commented. “This allows for a significant cost savings compared to other tightening devices.”

Dr. Weiss has used Exilis in combination with fractional devices to help with scarring or more superficial wrinkles, along with a reduction of saggy skin. Typically, these patients will schedule three fractional sessions, one month apart, followed by three Exilis sessions. Results are evaluated at six months. Likewise, patients who have undergone laser lipolysis with liposuction on the abdomen – but are left with some fat or weight gain – will benefit from two subsequent sessions of Exilis about three weeks apart for even smoother and tighter results, without needing to schedule a second session of liposuction.

Both the nurse practitioner and physician assistant at Dr. Weiss’s practice enjoy using Exilis more than other, similar devices because “it is a little less tedious

and they have more control over the treatment,” Dr. Weiss advised. “I personally like using it myself because I am not limited to a predefined treatment pattern. It’s nice to have the same kind of control as sculpting a face with dermal fillers. We have the ability to direct the treatment to problem areas, which is a significant advantage of Exilis. The staff also prefers Exilis because typically it does not cause the patient any pain.”

Moreover, patient feedback is encouraging. “I would say the rate of patient satisfaction is very high,” Dr. Weiss stated. “Often, patients will see some tightening and some smoothing immediately after treatment. They are generally very pleased, especially in relation to the cost and the time involved.”

One of the first patients Dr. Weiss treated with Exilis was a thin-skinned female in her early 50s. “I noticed after treating one half of her face, there was a real difference. The jowl was lifted,” he recalled. “With a total of three treatments on both sides of her face, the patient achieved outstanding results, and it truly complemented the dermal filler that I had placed in the nasolabial folds and in the cheeks. She looked ten years younger.”

Exilis also has “an excellent safety profile,” Dr. Weiss noted. “We’ve had no skin burns, which is theoretically possible with an RF device and a grounded device. However, since the patient is providing constant feedback about what they are feeling, this greatly reduces the risk of injury to the skin.”

Patricia Wexler, M.D., an associate clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City, N.Y., concurs with Dr. Weiss about his overall impressions of Exilis. “Treatment is quick and relatively

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Arm before Tx



Arm after four Exilis treatments

Photos courtesy of Peter Hajduk, M.D.

painless, with results seen in as early as two sessions and improvements continuing throughout treatment and time,” she said. “Exilis can also be used on virtually any area with fat or laxity of the skin. You do not need a minimum amount of skin or fat to be treated. Exilis not only treats the deepest layers, but rejuvenates the skin when treating the upper levels of the dermis, for less wrinkles and better skin tone.”

Dr. Wexler has used Exilis for fat reduction and skin tightening, as well as in patients who are not candidates for liposuction because of skin laxity. Post-liposuction patients are also candidates for treatment due to laxity or irregularity. “Patients with small areas that would be high risk for surgery and patients afraid of surgery can also benefit,” Dr. Wexler said.

Before treatment, Dr. Wexler arranges a patient consultation, takes photographs, measurements and weight, and discusses patient expectations of the procedure. Patients are also instructed to drink three liters of water the day before treatment, the day of treatment and the day after. Four treatment sessions are scheduled seven to ten days apart, with light physical activity in-between. “As early as the second treatment, patients can see one inch of improvement, skin tightening and textural change,” Dr. Wexler related.

If the patient perceives pain during treatment, the power is adjusted, “but the temperature is maintained within the therapeutic range at all times,” Dr. Wexler said. “Exilis is very user-friendly because there is one temperature range that is desired, and the screen is easy to use. The variables are few and there are minimal disposables.”

Furthermore, treatment is “extremely affordable for most patients, given the results,” Dr. Wexler said. Patients also appreciate the small amount of office time required for treatment. Similarly, Exilis “may be used in lieu of liposuction, after liposuction or even tried before liposuction as an alternative therapy,” she said. “Overall, my patients and staff alike are excited about the device’s technology and the results.”

David B. Vasily, M.D., a dermatologist and director of Aesthetica Cosmetic and Laser Surgery Center in Bethlehem, Penn., was hesitant to embrace RF technology. “I’ve never really been that excited about RF systems, preferring lasers instead. My experience with RF and the feedback I had received from many of my colleagues who also used RF was that it had delivered some results, for some people, some of the time. Therefore, RF was not a predictable, consistent type of device.”

However, Dr. Vasily was attracted to Exilis because he felt the device fulfilled a missing niche in aesthetics. “Exilis allows us to achieve some skin tightening, non-invasive wrinkle reduction and body contouring,” he said. Exilis offers a new approach to RF. “I liked some of the safety controls – the advanced cooling and temperature feedback. If you lose contact with the skin, the RF energy shuts off, so you do not risk any burning,” Dr. Vasily pointed out. The temperature feedback is particularly advantageous “for deeper applications.”

Dr. Vasily was also impressed by the engineering of the device, “allowing for flat-top, smooth delivery of the thermal energy, as opposed to spiky heating and delivery with most other RF devices. This delivery method, combined with the cooling and feedback,

“I was amazed at the reduction in some very coarse elastotic rhytides on the face and tightening of neck skin.”



61 year old patient before Tx



61 year old patient three months after four Exilis treatments
Photos courtesy of David B. Vasily, M.D.

allows for optimized delivery of energy and enhances safety. As a result, Exilis is able to address all compartments of the skin: superficial to deep.”

At Aesthetica, the primary usage of Exilis to date has been facial applications. “Results are amazing. In fact, Exilis is probably the most pleasant-surprise device I’ve ever had,” Dr. Vasily noted. “I started evaluating the device in older individuals because traditional wisdom established that it would be useful in people up to age 70. However, many women over age 70 desire to look as good as they can, but we are really limited in treatment options for this older age group. Results in this group – including a number of ladies in their mid to late 80s – have been just remarkable. It’s been very, very rewarding. Many patients had severe solar damage, also known as elastotic wrinkling. Patients have been thrilled with the outcomes.”

Initially, patients scheduled a treatment session about once every seven to ten days, for a total of four sessions. As early as one month after starting treatment, “I was amazed at the reduction in some very coarse elastotic rhytides on the face and tightening of neck skin,” Dr. Vasily said. One woman close to age 90 began treatment one month before attending her granddaughter’s wedding. “She looked fabulous for the wedding.”

“Some people see results after just one or two sessions, while others need to wait a few months after completing a series. For facial wrinkling, results are noticeable after two treatment sessions and certainly within one month after completion. However, tightening of facial laxity typically takes slightly longer. You may see results by the completion of a treatment series consisting

of four to six sessions, but more optimized results often occur one to three months after the treatments are completed.”

When the peak temperature of around 41° C is attained, patients “feel a little transient heat,” Dr. Vasily said. “Some people absolutely love the feeling and actually fall asleep during treatment. It seems to be very well tolerated and no anesthesia is used.”

Besides being user-friendly, the ergonomics and handpiece of Exilis “are very nice,” Dr. Vasily pointed out. “The handpiece is not too heavy and the workload on the joints and body is much less than with older endermologie type units, for example. Our Exilis is on from morning until evening, every day of the week. It is incredibly popular.” Dr. Vasily’s staff also enjoys Exilis. “It is a fairly easy treatment for them to perform and the device is fun to use,” he continued. “More importantly they like the patient feedback. Standard feedback from patients is that skin looks very pretty, with nice texture and tone. Patients then want other body areas to be treated, and they refer friends. Exilis markets itself through word-of-mouth.” Dr. Vasily has also successfully treated post-partum skin laxity of the belly with Exilis, as well as the abdomen.

Since there are no expensive disposables, “you have a lot of latitude in pricing,” Dr. Vasily advised. “This is very affordable treatment.” The procedure can also be performed year round. “During the summer, it is typically much harder to schedule photofacials and laser hair removal because patients are tan, so revenues drop off,” Dr. Vasily said. “However, Exilis can be safely used on tanned patients.”