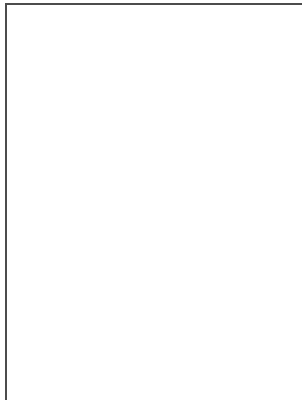


## 6 considerations before making that laser purchase

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Dr. Lee Choosing the right laser devices can add to the bottom line and patient satisfaction; choosing the wrong devices can be a drain on a practice's viability.

To help sort through the decision-making process of which lasers to add and which ones to avoid, Min-Wei Christine Lee, M.D., M.P.H., dermatologic surgeon and director of The Skin and Laser Treatment Institute in Walnut Creek, Calif., presented on

“Emerging Laser and Aesthetic Technology,” at the 2017 American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Annual Meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Keeping up with technological advances is important for dermatologists whether they offer treatment with specific devices or not. Dermatologists are the specialist's patients seek for laser treatments, as well as guidance and information on what's available, according to Dr. Lee.

“It's also important for doctors to know the differences between the devices, so they can make smart decisions about acquiring devices. The worst thing is for a doctor to invest \$150,000 or more on an expensive laser and later feel they made the wrong decision,” Dr. Lee tells *Dermatology Times*. “Every doctor's practice is different—some doctors may only need one laser to suit their needs, whereas, other doctors may actually need to invest in multiple lasers.”

*Six considerations before making that laser purchase*

Dr. Lee's top tips for helping dermatologists decide on which lasers to buy are:

**1. Compare lasers based on gold standard, best in class, cost benefit and practicality.**

Dermatologists should consider whether they'd be better off with a multi-modality system, offering many cosmetic and medical applications. At the same time, they should consider that quality might suffer if they settle for a low-cost multi-platform system—one that has many applications but is too low powered to do anything well.

“For example, an IPL multi-platform device might be able to do facial rejuvenation and laser hair removal very well but [may] not [be] capable of treating individual pigmented lesions. If you want to treat tattoos and pigmented lesions, you might need to get either a pico laser or a nanosecond laser, such as the Fotona QX-Max [Fotona], in addition to getting the IPL system. Or if you want to treat individual blood vessels and leg veins, then you might need to get the Excel V [Cutera] in addition or in place of the IPL system,” Dr. Lee says.

**2. Consider what a laser would add to your practice.** Will it add something new or simply duplicate what you already have?

**3. Is this a workhorse laser that you will use every day or simply the latest fad?**

**4. Research your local market to make sure the need or market for the laser you're considering is not already saturated.** For example, if there are 10 CoolSculpting [Zeltiq] lasers or 10 Ulthera [Merz Aesthetics] devices in your local area, you will need to consider carefully if there is enough demand to justify purchasing this for your practice.

**5. Survey the patients in your practice to see what the actual need or desire for a procedure is before committing to a purchase.** Ideally, you should be able to pay off the device within six to 12 months. If you don't have enough volume to cover the cost of the laser, you may end up making payments for many years. Salesmen usually only talk about best case scenarios.

“[They might say:] ‘Doctor, if you just do 10 of these treatments a month, you'll pay off the device in six months.’ What they don't tell you is some of their doctors are only doing one to two treatments a month, and it's going to take forever at that rate to pay off the laser (in fact, you may never pay it off, so you just made an expensive donation to that laser company),” she says.

**6. Talk to doctors who are actually using the laser about their experiences with it.** Don't forget, however, to consider the demographics—whether that doctor is the only one in his/her area doing lasers versus being in a very tight market with lots of competition. Consider also the type of patients that doctor sees and determine whether those patients are similar to yours in terms of socioeconomic class, ethnic diversity, etc. Yet another consideration: Does that doctor have a practice in a very affluent metropolitan area versus rural area?

“If you are considering a laser hair removal device for treating predominately dark skinned patients, you should talk to a doctor who is successfully treating a large population of dark skin patients using the device you are considering,” she says.

Next: Dr. Lee's favorite lasers

Dr. Lee's favorite lasers

Dr. Lee shares her top picks for laser devices, combinations and why she thinks they work so well.

### ***The Fotona SP Dynamis Pro [Fotona].***

It's like having 20 lasers in one device. There are many devices (mainly IPL-based) that claim to be like 20 lasers in a box but the difference is they are the "Jack of many trades; king of none."

The SP Dynamis Pro is best in class for many applications and is "king of many." It is a dual wavelength laser that has erbium and Nd:YAG lasers, featuring unique properties that aren't available with other erbium or Nd:YAG lasers. First, it's the world's first nonablative erbium: YAG laser that can safely be used inside the oral mucosa, vaginal mucosa and lower inner conjunctivae of the eyelid. It causes immediate contraction or tightening of the tissue by heating the tissue, without burning it. Other erbium lasers are ablative because they have short pulse durations of 1.5 milliseconds. This Erbium laser has a super long pulse of 250 milliseconds, which allows providers to safely use this device on all tissues, skin and mucosa, without the fear of causing tissue ablation. When used inside the mouth, in addition to causing tightening and contraction of the oral mucosa, it also causes tightening and contraction of the facial muscles, due to its proximity to the muscles. The thermal heating leads to tightening of facial muscles, which helps with facial skin tightening. Heating of the oral mucosa also causes plumping and smoothing of the lips and nasolabial folds.

The unique effects of this laser on mucosal tissue are also why the Fotona is the gold standard and only nonablative laser available on the market to help tighten the vagina. It was the world's first laser used for nonsurgical vaginal rejuvenation and tightening. Fotona has the only nonablative Erbium laser (called the Intimalase and Incontilase) for treating the vagina without causing any mucosal injury. Fotona has the most studies showing efficacy and safety for treating vaginal laxity, genitourinary syndrome of menopause, stress urinary incontinence, and uterine and pelvic organ prolapse. All the other lasers (MonaLisa Touch (DEKA), FemiLift (Alma Lasers), FemTouch (Lumenis), Co2RE Intima (Syneron Candela), Petite Lady (Imdad), Juliet (Asclepion Laser Technologies), Beladona (WON Tech), DiVa (Sciton), etc.) use either fractional CO2 or