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GUIDE®

Advanced Technology Reinvigorates Hair Removal Market

As a well-established mainstay of many aesthetic practices, hair removal is no longer considered an expensive, time-consuming luxury by consumers, but rather a long-term investment in appearance. Energy-based hair removal procedures continue to rise, and though laser-based options are in widespread use, none appear as advanced as a new solution that is effective across all skin types, offering fast treatment times and very reliable outcomes.

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**THE Aesthetic Industry Awards
THE Most Interesting Doctors
Male Aesthetics Update**

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BTL Vanquish ME Advances

Full Body Fat Reduction Treatments



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"With BTL Vanquish ME you can treat the back and flanks as well as other indications, such as thighs and arms. It is an extremely flexible device that is not limited to patients with high or low BMIs."

By Jeffrey Frentzen, Executive Editor

Increasingly, energy-based fat reduction procedures can be relied upon to yield good, predictable outcomes via non-surgical, less invasive treatments that sidestep patient pain or significant downtime. The radiofrequency (RF)-based BTL Vanquish ME from BTL Industries, Inc. (Framingham, Mass.) is one such device that has pulled ahead of the pack in terms of effectiveness, value and technological advancements.

FDA cleared for circumferential fat reduction of the abdomen, this system also provides practitioners with additional valuable applications in clinical practice. Most non-invasive systems tend to focus only on treating small areas of fat among a relatively fit patient population; however, the BTL Vanquish ME enables reduction of adipose tissue and contouring on all body areas of all sizes. In addition, it offers a way to treat symptoms of obesity, such as larger areas of belly fat as well as adiposities along the posterior hips, inner and outer thighs, back and more.

The BTL Vanquish ME technology can be broadly utilized as a stand-alone therapy or in combination with other pre- or post-operative lipectomy techniques that are used to achieve better results, stated Humberto Palladino, M.D., F.A.C.S., a plastic surgeon in El Paso, Texas.

"Many patients are afraid of the pain associated with surgery or are unable to afford the downtime of a surgical procedure. These are excellent candidates for BTL Vanquish ME treatments," Dr. Palladino advised. "This allows us to capture a larger patient population, thus increasing practice revenue."

According to Suneel Chilukuri, M.D., a dermatologic surgeon in Bellaire, Texas, "People ask for a less invasive solution because not everyone wants to endure the downtime that comes with liposuction. They also want fast results. In addition, since obesity is a huge problem in the U.S., I sought out a suitable option for patients that have a body mass index [BMI] above 30. All of this led me to purchase the Vanquish."

As of 2014, more than one-third of Americans are considered obese with a BMI greater than 30, as noted in *THE Global Aesthetic Market Study: Version XIII* from Medical Insight, Inc. (Aliso Viejo, Calif.), which denoted another third of the population as overweight with BMIs ranging from 25 to 30. Data from the World Health Organization reveals average rates of obesity are rising by about 2% per year globally across all racial and ethnic lines. "These data help to explain the growing demand for fat reduction treatments," stated Francisco Agullo, M.D., a plastic surgeon in El Paso, Texas.

"Most non-invasive fat removal devices are indicated for BMIs of 30 and under," Dr. Agullo continued. "Although some energy-based fat reducing devices say they are indicated for a BMI of 30, many practitioners will not treat BMIs of over 25 with these systems due to unevenness of treatment and visible lines of demarcation."

As well, some competing technologies treat only specific areas, which can cause contour defects, Dr. Agullo added. "With BTL Vanquish ME you can treat the back and flanks as well as other indications, such as thighs and arms. It is an extremely flexible device that is not limited to patients with high or low BMIs."

Moreover, the BTL Vanquish ME's large spot size enables practitioners to treat the abdomen and flanks in one session. "This allows for a smoother transition between treated and untreated areas, as well as less contour deformities post-procedure," Dr. Agullo noted.

Employing proprietary technology with a contactless panel array that forms a high-frequency Selective RF™ energy field, this system effectively treats broad areas of the midsection, heating up and destroying adipocytes permanently, achieving natural-looking results in four to six sessions lasting approximately 45 minutes each. No anesthesia, medication or downtime is required. Other than increased hydration before, during and for two days after treatment, no advances or post provision is necessary.

Almost all patients can benefit from BTL Vanquish ME, Dr. Agullo indicated. "The great advantage of this system is that patients can return to work the same day, as well as experience a reduction in the waistline or an improvement in the thighs and arms that is significant," he said. "Before and after pictures are important in demonstrating to patients the difference between liposuction and BTL Vanquish ME treatments. This helps to set their expectations. For patients seeking true surgical liposculpturing, liposuction is still the gold standard."

Guiding patient expectations is key to success, stated Dr. Chilukuri. "Patients are influenced by the fact that both the BTL Vanquish ME system and surgical liposuction produce permanent fat destruction," he shared. "They are also encouraged by the fact that they can continue to receive BTL Vanquish ME treatments over time to further define their waistline and decrease the size of their abdomen, arms or thigh girth."

The larger the patient, the greater circumference loss, Dr. Chilukuri pointed out. "We can tell most patients with a BMI between 20 and 25 – which is normal – that they will see approximately a one inch reduction in their waistline. Obese patients, meaning those with a BMI of 30, can expect a waist reduction of up to four inches."

Dr. Agullo uses this information to promote the BTL Vanquish ME treatment to larger or obese patients. "Our general statement for marketing the system is that it will reduce their waist size from one to as much as four inches," he expressed. "Of course, the BTL Vanquish ME treatment has to be incorporated into a healthy diet, as well as an increased fluid intake during the course of therapy. For the greatest amount of waist reduction we encourage a circumferential treatment called the 'shrink wrap' regimen."

This shrink-wrap approach offers added versatility when treating the abdomen, claimed Dr. Palladino. "During this procedure we treat the lower abdomen and the flanks for 45 minutes, and then the patient is turned to the prone position where we treat the lower back and flanks for another 45 minutes. This results in faster session times, as well as decreased circumferential fat, which translates into an increased waist reduction."

"In our practice, when we perform the shrink wrap treatment the average loss in the patient's waist is two to three inches," Dr. Chilukuri reported. "In terms of fitting into their clothes more comfortably, we see around two pant sizes lost. Although it is a wide variation, we are not finding much less than that."



Before Tx



One week after third BTL Vanquish ME Tx

Photos courtesy of Suneel Chilukuri, M.D.



Before Tx



Six weeks after four BTL Vanquish ME treatments

Photos courtesy of Francisco Agullo, M.D.



Before Tx



One week after first BTL Vanquish ME Tx

Photos courtesy of Suneel Chilukuri, M.D.



Before Tx



Four weeks after four BTL Vanquish ME treatments

Photos courtesy of Francisco Agullo, M.D.

This regimen is especially popular with male patients, who typically do not want to sit through long treatments, Dr. Chilukuri added. "I recall two gentlemen that were wary about the shrink wrap procedure at first. We explained the entire process and emphasized no downtime and no pain whatsoever. Compared with women, men just seem to be a bit more cautious when it comes to pain. These two men completed the first session and observed visible results. Soon, they both returned to my office and asked when they could do another. That's a testament to the safety, efficiency and superior outcomes of this device."

Another positive aspect: Patients can choose to continue BTL Vanquish ME applications depending on the desired endpoint. "We have had patients with low fat content, but trouble areas, such as the flanks, that we have treated successfully," Dr. Agullo advised. "I've had body builders as patients who wish to achieve further definition of their abdominal wall and decrease the size of the flanks or love handle area. Alongside these patients are those with high BMI that want to fulfill their wish of reducing their overall abdomen and waist size."

While BTL Vanquish ME can be effective on thinner patients, "They need to have enough fat for a treatment," Dr. Chilukuri emphasized. "For thinner patients that tend to have very low BMI, we may have additional options for them, such as injectables, to achieve the ideal outcome. The point is that BTL Vanquish ME adds value to almost any treatment modality, from surgical to non-surgical; and that is good for all aesthetic patients, both female and male."

For instance, as an adjunct to surgery, the BTL Vanquish ME can be used for fat debulking in order to save money for both the practice and the patient, Dr. Palladino suggested. "The device's technology can be used during the pre-op period to reduce the amount of adipose tissue, as well as improve the silhouette and overall result after surgery. It can also be used post-op to deliver further skin tightening and contour improvement. The results continue to occur after several months and even over one year after treatment. The procedures can be repeated, which allows for further reduction of volume."

The fact that the BTL Vanquish ME has pre- and post-procedure applications allows a practice to continually engage with patients over months and even years, Dr. Palladino pointed out. "When increasing the number of patient visits, you increase the chances for further business. Satisfied patients return and bring their friends and family."

Dr. Agullo characterized the BTL Vanquish ME therapy as, "A total winner for surgical and/or non-surgical practices. Since adding this treatment, the response in our area has been great for both male and female patients, but it has drawn more male patients to our practice. They are seeking non-invasive weight loss procedures where they can return to work immediately."

Dr. Chilukuri specifically set out to attract more males to his office using the BTL Vanquish ME as bait. "When it comes to male patients, fat reduction and body shaping with energy-based, non-invasive devices is a wave of the future," he stated. "I've been able to grow my practice for men from 7% to 30% of total patients. In the past, neurotoxin was the traditional introduction to cosmetic procedures, however, in recent months I've used the BTL Vanquish ME to introduce men to the other services

we offer. I have found that it delivers treatment protocols and anti-aging regimens that many men feel more comfortable with."

Male patients require a different approach compared with women. "They look at the before-and-after photos we display on our video screen in the office and marvel," Dr. Agullo shared. "One of the biggest issues when dealing with men is they don't always pay attention to the options available to make them appear younger, so you have to actively show them. Until they come in and take a look, they are unaware of how aesthetic procedures can 'fix' their image. After they see the results of BTL Vanquish ME treatments they say it's such a confidence booster for them."

In Dr. Chilukuri's experience, it is essential for the practitioner to partner with their patients, in order to engage them throughout the multiple sessions, as well as ensure that they follow through with any post-procedure regimen. "Show them the value of this treatment, both financially and aesthetically," he advised. "They will see the changes from week to week and how safe it is, as well as the consistent results."

From the practitioner's point of view, the BTL Vanquish ME comes with many other attractive characteristics. "The fact that this system does not have any disposables is very important to me," Dr. Palladino stated. "This has allowed us to identify the best price point in our area in order to be profitable." The price range for the BTL Vanquish ME is quite competitive with the other systems on the market. "In addition to no disposable costs, there are no required fees per patient or per treatment. In our experience, this technology pays for itself in less than one year," Dr. Palladino added.

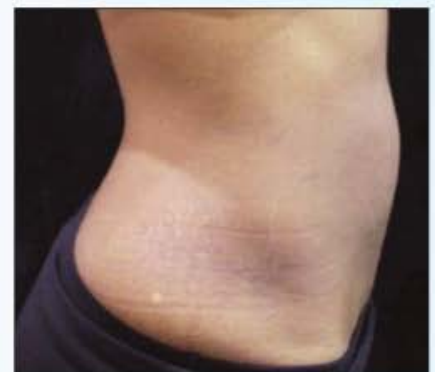
Return on investment is easy and simple, explained Dr. Chilukuri. "As a small business owner and the only practitioner in my office, I always look at the bottom line and ask myself the following: 'Is the treatment safe? Yes. Is it effective? Yes.' Most practitioners will see the return on investment within four to six months. If you have a busy practice then maybe it will take only one month. Even with a slow practice where you see around one to ten patients per day, it might take a year."

In addition, good after sale product support is vital, Dr. Chilukuri continued. "Many aesthetic device companies will sell you a device, but provide no after sale support. My BTL sales representatives have provided more for me than I ever expected. Anything we need, any questions we have, they are accessible 24/7. They are also available to come in and train new staff even though there is nothing to repurchase."

In total, the BTL Vanquish ME is an easy-to-use device that comes with an abundance of advanced features, stated Dr. Palladino. "The system works extremely well with minimal oversight. Its excellent safety profile and consistent, reliable outcomes make it an extra hard-performing tool in your practice," he said. "The lack of associated fees per application and consumables is key in increasing the profitability of the product. Procedures do not require continued hands-on involvement of the staff, and no serious side effects or consequences have been noted over the last two years of use."



Before Tx



One week after third BTL Vanquish ME Tx

Photos courtesy of Suneel Chilukuri, M.D.

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