

Maximize Contouring Outcomes with BTL Vanquish ME Combination Therapies



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BTL Aesthetics (Framingham, Mass.) specialists are suggesting powerful new body contouring protocols, termed ‘Fire and Ice’ and ‘Fire and Fire,’ that combine BTL Vanquish ME and other BTL modalities with the unique capabilities of competing devices to provide a global result that is second to none.

Starting with the circumference reduction and debulking power of BTL Vanquish ME, using the recommended protocol of four 45-minute treatments, physicians then treat with other safe, effective and popular modalities such as Cryolipolysis® (Fire and Ice) or hyperthermic laser fat reduction (Fire and Fire) as a spot treatment. BTL Exilis Ultra and/or BTL Cellutone can play a role as well.

According to dermatologist and cosmetic surgeon Suneel Chilukuri, M.D., medical director of Refresh Dermatology in Houston, Texas, this arises from a currently prominent trend in aesthetic medicine. “It’s often been suggested, but now we see it more and more,” he stated. “The use of multiple modalities can bring results that are visibly better than one would obtain from any therapy alone, with other potential benefits such as more rapid recovery or onset of result.” A recent study¹ found that a course of four treatments using BTL Vanquish ME without manual massage achieved an average reduction of the abdominal fat thickness layer of 5.36 mm (±1.49 mm, measured by MRI).

“Sculpting with Cryolipolysis relies on using the variety of applicators to your advantage, but when you add BTL Vanquish ME it adds a dimension to treatment that enhances overall fat reduction,” said Vivian Bucay, M.D., medical director of the Bucay Center for Dermatology and Aesthetics (San Antonio, Texas). “It’s easy to combine BTL Vanquish ME and other BTL devices with other technologies for non-invasive fat reduction, and the lack of consumables helps control costs.”

Unquestionably there is a cost consideration because typically patients require more than one Cryolipolysis treatment. “For those of us who invested in Cryolipolysis and obtained two devices to shorten session times, we also have to take the cost of new cycle cards into account, as well as applicators,” Dr. Bucay pointed out. “The option of combining these with the BTL suite of devices enables us to offer a wider variety of patients the potential for high-satisfaction outcomes.”

Gregory F. Bland, M.D., medical director of the Center for Plastic Surgery in Colorado Springs, Colo., agreed. “In our clinical experience there is a certain percentage of people who don’t respond well to these devices individually, but with combination protocols we’ve achieved a satisfaction rate of more than 95%, which is greater than we could achieve with these modalities alone. And if we need to do a little more to tweak the result, we can inexpensively add a BTL treatment because there are no consumables, which we often choose to do at no cost to the patient.”

While Cryolipolysis, for example, is the current market leader in non-invasive body contouring, it is not suitable for everybody, according to Dr. Bucay. Some markets may be saturated. It may be indicated for patients with a BMI ≤ 30, but many physicians restrict treatment to a BMI ≤ 25 for best results, while BTL Vanquish ME is a viable option for larger patients. Also, we can even treat patients exhibiting certain conditions such as abdominal hernia, for which Cryolipolysis is contraindicated. “Because of the large spot size and ‘non-contact’ applicator, BTL Vanquish ME can service many patients not ideally suited for Cryolipolysis or other modalities.”



Before Tx



After BTL Vanquish ME and Cryolipolysis treatments

Photos courtesy of Gregory F. Bland, M.D.

In Dr. Chilukuri's experience, the multi-modality approach also helps counter patient psychology. "What happens when we are treated, or lose weight, or anything like this, is that when it's over we don't see what's missing or changed, we notice what's left," he said. "Using combination therapies allows us to maximize the overall result and leave as few 'leftover' areas as possible, which raises patient satisfaction even higher."

"When using BTL Vanquish ME to debulk, I may use BTL Exilis Ultra after because the toning and tightening of surface tissue is always an excellent complement to fat reduction," said Dr. Chilukuri. When the course of BTL Vanquish ME treatments is winding down, any stubborn areas remaining will be more obvious. "At this point I treat with hyperthermic laser fat reduction because it is so effective for localized reshaping."

Dr. Bucay often starts with BTL Vanquish ME as well when combining it with Cryolipolysis, because of the large spot size. "I will often combine it with BTL Exilis Ultra to increase tissue heating, as well as enhance tissue contraction and tightening, plus mechanical massage therapy with a device like BTL Cellutone because of the way it diffuses the damage to the adipocytes and enhances the onset of the result. We employ Cryolipolysis at a later visit to further sculpt the overall outcome, depending on the applicators used."

Taking a different tack, Dr. Bland will do a session of BTL Vanquish ME, followed by Cryolipolysis, then continue on with a course of three or four BTL Vanquish ME treatments, each spaced about a week apart. "This way we can maximize the benefit of a single application of Cryolipolysis without having to repeat that modality, which reduces costs as well." The point of starting with BTL Vanquish ME when doing a same-day combination, he added, is that Vanquish treatment requires some level of patient feedback during the session. "Cryolipolysis has a temporary numbing affect, obviously due to the cold, and that affects accurate patient sensation feedback if we do that first."

Dr. Chilukuri also adds BTL Cellutone for the powerful, yet patient-friendly massage component. "Patients love the way BTL Cellutone speeds the onset of results," he said. "Nobody wants to admit it, but the importance of the massage component to body contouring therapies is well established." The significance of manual massage to non-invasive fat reduction therapies was highlighted in a 2014 study of Cryolipolysis,² showing average reductions with adjunctive manual massage (5.3 mm) as more than twice those seen without massage (1.9 mm).

The rapid onset of visible results seen with BTL therapies is a key aspect to the success of combination protocols, Dr. Chilukuri added. "BTL Vanquish ME results fully manifest within a month, so as the process moves forward patients are motivated. Real results with other popular modalities take much longer to appear."

"With the BTL devices being so comfortable during treatment, so effective and relatively inexpensive to operate due to lack of consumables, it's easy to work them into a protocol we might do without overly inflating the cost to the patient," Dr. Chilukuri said. "When patients enjoy a treatment and the effects that much they're curious about what else we can do for them, thus generating the repeat business that practices thrive on. More importantly to me, they seem motivated to adhere to the kind of lifestyle changes that maintain and improve upon these outcomes, and that's the best thing for overall patient wellness."

References:

1. Downie J, Kaspar M. *Contactless abdominal fat reduction with Selective RF™ evaluated by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI): Case Study. J Drugs Dermatol* 2016;15(4):491-5.
2. Boey GE, Wasilenchuk JL. *Enhanced clinical outcome with manual massage following cryolipolysis treatment: a 4-month study of safety and efficacy. Lasers Surg Med* 2014;46(1):20-6.

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Before Tx



After BTL Vanquish ME and hyperthermic laser fat reduction treatments
Photos courtesy of Suneel Chilukuri, M.D.