

# Cosmetic Surgery Times

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Where the Exchange on Aesthetic Perspective Begins

## Vibraderm improves exfoliation, penetration

New system becoming popular with physicians, patients

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### Quick read

A new device called the Vibraderm system provides a safe, effective and patient-friendly means of exfoliating and infusing topical preparations, experts tell CST. Among the system's applications are chemical peels and photodynamic therapy for both cosmetic and medical purposes.

Irving, Texas — A new system uses hand-held vibrating paddles to improve both exfoliation and absorption of topical preparations, say physicians who have used it.

Called Vibraderm (Vibraderm Inc.), the system is becoming a popular tool for performing microdermabrasion and boosting results of procedures, including chemical peels and photoaging treatments.

"Vibraderm removes the surface layer of skin and simulates a tiny bit of inflammation. For me, what that means is it's a great way to infuse products more deeply into the skin so that one can deliver them where they're needed to sun-damaged areas," says Eric Bernstein, M.D., a dermatologic laser surgeon in Bryn Mawr, Pa., and clinical associate professor of dermatology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Because every patient gets his or her own exfoliation and Vibration paddles, Dr. Bernstein adds, "It's totally hygienic. There's no sterilizing of tips or worrying about cross-contamination."

He says that another unique element of Vibraderm is that its lack of sand or particles means it leaves no post-treatment residue.

### Using the Vibraderm

"The vibrating motion stimulates the skin and feels great," Dr. Bernstein reports. "Most importantly, it has separate paddles that allow one to infuse products directly into the skin."

Frequently, Dr. Bernstein uses Vibraderm to infuse an antioxidant/alpha hydroxy acid (AHA) product he has developed. He says the benefits of this combination have "blown away any other microdermabrasion device I have used. Vibraderm is great for photoaging, melasma and pigmentary disorders, fine lines, wrinkles, large pores, brown spots and acne."

For photoaging, Dr. Bernstein says, "One achieves a lot more synergy when one aggressively uses conservative therapies, meaning the Vibraderm allows one to give a super-infusion of topical product between laser treatments."

In Dr. Bernstein's practice, a typical patient requires four to six sessions at monthly intervals, followed by maintenance once every two to three months.

To exfoliate, the manufacturer recommends treating six zones with a medium exfoliation paddle for two minutes each. These zones include the forehead (plus eyebrows), both sides of the face, the chin and lips, the neck and the décolleté.

Conversely, the nose and orbital rim require a small exfoliation paddle, gently applied for one to two minutes.

To infuse topical products, a separate Vibration paddle provides an irregular surface without abrasive qualities. A typical chemical peel requires four to six minutes to fully penetrate the skin, according to Vibraderm.

"Dr. Bernstein's Citric Solutions product



Before and after 5 treatments.  
Courtesy of Dr. Suzanne Yee

“The way I measure results is through my patients, and my patients are extremely pleased with the Vibraderm.”

— Eric Bernstein, M.D.  
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

takes about a minute to infuse,” adds Nicole Baltimore, a medical aesthetician in Dr. Bernstein’s practice. “I may decide next to use The Concentrate (La Mer) and add some moisture back into the skin, which also takes a minute.” Conversely, a thicker product might require two minutes, she says.

Vibraderm works in areas such as the back of the arms and legs, as well as the feet, Ms. Baltimore adds.

“If I’m trying to treat the bottom of someone’s feet,” she says, “I’ll use something that has an even more aggressive exfoliator with grit in it, followed by a heavy-duty cream to smooth the area. That’s going to take longer than (treating) the face.”

Vibraderm provides a much more relaxing experience for patients than microdermabrasion, she says.

“The only time I find any sort of tingling is if I’m infusing an AHA product into the skin. Also, the vibrating motion can tickle or make some people sneeze” when applied around the nose, Ms. Baltimore notes.

#### Improvements after treatment

After treatment, Dr. Bernstein says, “patients’ skin is pink for 15 to 30 minutes. It feels smoother and better for the next few days. At about a week out, one starts to see real changes taking place, including improvement in fine lines, wrinkles and large pores.”

Patients can’t always identify such details, he says — they just know their skin looks better.

“The way I measure results is through my patients,” Dr. Bernstein says. “And my patients are extremely pleased with the Vibraderm.”

In fact, he says that by offering an initial free treatment, he’s achieved a return rate above 90 percent.

“I use Vibraderm routinely prior to aminolevulinic acid treatments for photodynamic therapy (PDT),” says Michael H. Gold, M.D., medical director at Gold Skin Care Center and at the Tennessee Clinical Research Center, Nashville. “I’m convinced that by using the paddle system before ALA, I’m significantly enhancing the penetration of the ALA.”

Though he’s not able to quantify the improvement, Dr. Gold says that with contact times of 30 to 60 minutes, “We’re trying to ensure that we deliver as much of the ALA into the skin as we can. So therefore, if the Vibraderm is helping the ALA penetrate faster, then we’re getting more ALA to the target.”

#### More uses for the Vibraderm

Vibraderm also provides as good an exfoliation treatment as any other system on the market, without causing patients discomfort, Dr. Gold adds.

“We’ve run the gamut — from aluminum oxide crystals to salt, and crystal-less systems such as the Silk Peel (eMed Inc.). Now there

are even water-based exfoliating systems. All these competing systems have good potential. But I’m comfortable using Vibraderm with ALA, because when one is using a light or laser, one doesn’t want to put extra things like crystals on the skin,” he says.

In his practice, Dr. Gold uses Vibraderm for conditions ranging from photoaging to acne.

“We have two of the systems here,” he says. “They run almost constantly. Patients really like them, and the manufacturer has done a little science to back up their claims (De Souza A, et al. *Aesthetic Surg J.* 2005;25:40-43). That’s important — we must be able to show that these systems work.”

Dr. Gold says the system’s only drawback is that it adds cost to PDT. However, he says that patients who have experienced Vibraderm feel the expense is well worth it.

On a broader scale, physicians’ and patients’ understanding of microdermabrasion is changing, experts tell **Cosmetic Surgery Times**.

According to Dr. Bernstein, “The value of microdermabrasion is not to try to sand defects out of the skin. What one uses microdermabrasion for is to strongly deliver agents to the skin that are going to result in rejuvenation and a healing response without producing injury.” **CST**

**Disclosure:** Dr. Bernstein reports no financial interest in Vibraderm. Dr. Gold has served as a consultant for Dusa Pharmaceuticals and owns stock in the company.

**For additional information:**

[www.vibraderm.com](http://www.vibraderm.com)

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