

Vibrafusion Process Improves Efficacy of Topicals

By **Bob Kronemyer**, Associate Editor

Thanks to a new plastic infusion paddle, the Vibrafusion™ system from Vibraderm, Inc. (Irving, Texas) can now easily infuse topical formulations deeper into the skin for enhanced aesthetic results.

“Microdermabrasion can be a sort of a cosmeceutical delivery method, and the Vibraderm device is perfectly suited for that,” said Eric Bernstein, M.D., a clinical associate professor of dermatology at the University of Pennsylvania in Bryn Mawr. “There are no crystals or abrasives associated with the Vibraderm procedure. The vibrating motion also feels good to the patient. And the procedure stimulates some increased blood flow and inflammation, which is desirable.”

Dr. Bernstein has not used his other microdermabrasion devices since acquiring the Vibraderm. “In my opinion, the Vibraderm is the best form of microdermabrasion,” he said. “After stimulating the skin and stripping off the superficial dead skin, you can infuse products directly into the dermis by using a plastic infusion paddle. We have created an antioxidant alpha hydroxy acid (AHA) product called



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Prescription for Repair (Citric Solutions). We infuse this product immediately after treatment. This further helps exfoliate the skin. Patients become pink for about 15 minutes. Afterwards, we infuse The Concentrate (La Mer).”

Four to six sessions at monthly intervals are typically scheduled, followed by maintenance once every two

to three months. “We are seeing great results. People are extremely happy,” Dr. Bernstein said. “There is an improvement in fine lines and wrinkles and large pores. The overall tone and texture of the skin is also more vibrant. In addition, each patient has his own paddles, so treatment is very hygienic. Basically, we’re treating all over the body. Besides the face and neck,

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we’re doing hands and backs. Prescription for Repair also helps with acne. I believe Vibraderm is a major innovation in skincare. It is a very scientific approach. We have a Vibraderm in both of our offices. They are used nearly non-stop.”

“The Vibraderm dramatically changes the tone and texture of the skin, even after one treatment,” said Belinda Ruda, an aesthetician at Dermatology Associates of Atlanta, in Georgia. “I like that there are no particles or vacuums involved, so it is a very pleasant treatment.”

An ideal patient is “anyone with fine lines and wrinkles, age spots or dull skin, acne scars, dryness and oily skin. The procedure also reduces pore size,” reported Ms. Ruda, who is in practice with Edmond Griffin, M.D. “The grooves on the infusion paddle are not as deep as the stainless steel paddle.” For a patient with normal-to-oily skin, “I have found that a topical ascorbic acid will help with that oil, but yet nourish the skin. For a patient with normal-to-dry skin, a hydrating fluid is infused. We can also perform this treatment on a rosacea patient – something traditional microdermabrasion cannot do. We use a spray hydrating toner.”

After any resurfacing procedure, “sun exposure is a factor. You must wear a sun protection factor (SPF) at all times,” Ms. Ruda stressed. “All of our patients leave the office with a sunscreen (UVA/UVB).”



Vibraderm

“I use the Vibraderm for prepping patients undergoing facial laser treatments,” said Mary Flor, R.N., a clinical laser specialist at the Center for Cosmetic Care in Minneapolis, Minn. “After performing a facial treatment with the Vibraderm, we can use the infusion paddle to work the numbing cream in. We use a mix from the hospital, which is a lidocaine/pilocaine combination, similar to EMLA. We use the Vibraderm to infuse the medication prior to the laser treatment. Usually we apply the EMLA cream anyway. But the infusion seems to provide a better numbing effect. It also decreases the amount of time the patient has to wait before treatment.”

This lidocaine/pilocaine combination is applied 30 minutes before a Smoothbeam (Candela) diode laser treatment for acne, and 60 minutes before a Fraxel

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(Reliant Technologies) laser treatment for skin tightening. Infusion takes about five minutes.

The Center for Cosmetic Care also infuses Levulan (DUSA Pharmaceuticals) for photodynamic therapy (PDT) with the Vibraderm. “The incubation time still ranges between one and two hours, with an occlusive wrap,” Ms. Flor explained. “However, we’re seeing an intense response. We feel the Levulan is more efficacious. Many patients feel the intensity of the light

treatment. The Levulan results are definitely enhanced by the infusion paddle.”

Levulan PDT sessions for actinic keratoses range from one to three. “We don’t use Levulan too often for acne yet,” Ms. Flor said. “But our aestheticians use the infusion paddle when doing facials. Some skincare products, such as moisturizers, are infused deep into the skin. Following the infusion of the topical, an occlusive wrap is applied.”

“We also use the Vibraderm to help deliver Levulan through the skin,” said Michael Gold, M.D., owner of Gold Skin Care Center in Nashville, Tenn. “In those patients that we want to increase the penetration of Levulan, we’ve discussed using acetone scrubs, microdermabrasion or the Vibraderm for crystal-less microdermabrasion. The Vibraderm seems to do as good of

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job, if not better, than crystal microdermabrasion. For the most part, patients have been much more receptive to the idea of having a paddle dermabrasion-type procedure than having crystals put on their skin.”

Dr. Gold observed that across the board, crystal-less microdermabrasion “is becoming much more popular than crystal microdermabrasion. There is also a whole new market that has yet to be discovered using the Vibraderm to deliver other topicals.” The two main compounds Dr. Gold is currently infusing are salicylic acid for acne and hydroquinones for bleaching purposes.

“A hydroquinone can be used as both a take-home product and in the office as almost a treatment protocol,” Dr. Gold explained. An average in-office session lasts 30 minutes. “We’re mainly treating facial areas. We’re also using low concentrations, so as not to damage the skin. Up until now, we really haven’t given much thought to delivering compounds into the skin. Perhaps we can come up with a way to perform treatment once every week or once every two weeks in the office to increase penetration or enhance the penetration. My patients are seeing benefits and are very happy. I expect that this market will explode.” ■