

PATIENT INFORMATION · LASER DENTISTRY

Laser dentistry

The Fotona LightWalker laser, used for some fillings and gum treatments where it suits you.

What is it?

The Fotona LightWalker is a dental laser that combines two wavelengths. Er:YAG energy is absorbed by water in tooth and soft tissue, removing it in tiny pulses with a cooling water spray. Nd:YAG reaches deeper into soft tissue for gum treatments and disinfection.

Not every treatment is suitable for laser. Large fillings, crowns and some other situations still need conventional instruments.

- **Cavity preparation:** removing decay before a filling, in suitable cases
- **Gum reshaping:** including some crown lengthening cases
- **Root canal disinfection:** as part of cleaning the root canals
- **Periodontal therapy:** supporting treatment of gum disease
- **Snoring and sleep apnoea:** the practice also offers treatment with the LightWalker; ask whether it may suit you, and talk to your GP too

Who it may help

- ✓ Some small to moderate cavities
- ✓ Some gum treatments and gum reshaping
- ✓ People who would like to ask about laser options for their treatment

Suitability depends on your individual situation and is confirmed after an examination.

How it works

1 The laser handpiece is positioned over a small area of decay.

2 Pulses of laser light and a fine water spray remove the decay.

3 The cleaned area is ready to be filled.

A typical sequence. Your dentist will explain your own plan.

What to expect

- 1 Assessment.** Your dentist explains whether laser suits your treatment, what you may feel and whether you'll need local anaesthetic.
- 2 Eye protection.** You and your dentist wear protective glasses.
- 3 Treatment.** You may feel a light tapping sensation. Some procedures need less local anaesthetic, but many still need it. Experiences vary.

Things to consider

- **Not for every treatment:** some situations need conventional instruments
- **Anaesthetic:** many procedures still need local anaesthetic
- **Risks:** like any treatment, laser treatment has risks, which your dentist will explain

Any surgical or invasive procedure carries risks. Before proceeding, you should seek a second opinion from an appropriately qualified health practitioner.

Aftercare

- ✓ **Same day:** many people return to normal activities straight away; if anaesthetic was used, wait for the numbness to wear off
- ✓ **Gum treatments:** brush the area softly and avoid very hot or spicy foods for a day or two
- ✓ **Rinses:** follow any rinse instructions
- ✓ **Call us if:** pain, bleeding or swelling increases

General guidance only. Always follow the specific instructions your dentist gives you.

Costs & health funds

Fees depend on your treatment and are confirmed after an examination, with a written estimate before planned treatment starts. Your health fund rebate depends on your fund, level of extras cover, annual limits and waiting periods. We can claim on the spot with Tyro, so on the day you pay any gap. All health funds are welcome.

Call (08) 9330 7115 if you have heavy bleeding, pain or swelling that gets worse, fever, or anything that worries you. For trouble breathing or swallowing, call 000.

Questions to ask your dentist

- ? Is laser suitable for my treatment?
- ? Will I still need local anaesthetic?
- ? What will I feel during treatment?
- ? What are the risks, and what are the alternatives?
- ? Could laser treatment for snoring or sleep apnoea suit me?
- ? What will it cost?

Before your appointment

- ✓ Ask whether laser suits your treatment, and whether you'll still need local anaesthetic
- ✓ If you'll have local anaesthetic, have a normal meal beforehand: you may be numb for a few hours
- ✓ Tell us about any changes to your health or medicines since your last visit
- ✓ Your Medicare card and health fund card, for on-the-spot claiming with Tyro
- ✓ A DVA or concession card, if you have one

General guidance only. Always follow your dentist's specific instructions.

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