

IMPROVING FRACTIONAL DRUG DELIVERY WITH PVP

Researchers at the Wellman Center for Photomedicine at Massachusetts General Hospital and Denmark's Bispebjerg Hospital are seeking to improve fractional laser-assisted drug delivery through the use of pressure and vacuum. For a study published in *Lasers in Surgery and Medicine* (February 2016), Franz diffusion chambers were used to evaluate the efficacy of pressure-vacuum-pressure (PVP) to increase drug uptake in

the deeper skin layers: The researchers administered fractional CO₂ laser treatments to generate superficial (225µm; 17.5mj/channel) and deep (1,200µm; 130.5mj/channel) channels in the skin, and PVP was delivered in three-minute cycles (one minute pressure, one minute vacuum and one minute pressure). The filling of the laser-created channels was visualized with a colored biomarker liquid. Nuclear magnetic resonance was

used to quantify intracutaneous deposition of topically applied polyethylene glycol with and without PVP.

The results showed that active filling with the application of PVP increased the number of filled laser channels and that the polyethylene glycol reach deeper skin layers with the addition of PVP. At a depth of 1,000µm, filling increased from 44% with fractional channels alone to 94% following one PVP cycle.



Moving Beyond Traditional Marketing

When practices think of marketing, they typically think of web-based advertising, print ads, in-house signage or open house events. But letters to the editor, opinion

editorial articles (op-eds), and letters of endorsement are some of the most meaningful ways to get the word out about your medical practice and expertise, says Cheryl Whitman, founder of Beautiful Forever Consulting.

She recommends submitting letters to the editors of newspapers, websites and journals when they publish relevant articles about your specialty on which you feel you can comment. To increase the odds of publication, be as brief as possible in sharing your point of view and always pay attention to the publication's target reader demographics.

Op-eds are an excellent way to raise public awareness about new medical concerns and your practice. They also have the potential to educate policy makers. Make sure your op-ed is timely and covers current problems as well as potential solutions.

Letters of endorsement from third parties, including patients and colleagues, may be used in press kits and marketing materials. The purpose of a letter of endorsement is for a third party to provide a vision of the benefits they received from your practice's services or an understanding of your credible skills. The most common are patient testimonials accompanied by before and after photos. But letters of endorsement from well-regarded community members, including elected public officials, medical professionals and well-known personalities, can also support practice growth.



Checklists for Satisfaction

Checklists have become commonplace in operating rooms where they are used to improve patient safety, but they can also be used to improve patient satisfaction at all levels of care. Doctella, a company that provides customizable checklists to hospitals and medical practices, is now offering patient checklists that can be accessed on mobile, web and print platforms. Patients can search the doctor's website by specific procedure, get checklists—including questions to ask your provider, and pre- and post-visit reminders—and either access or download those checklists to take a more active role in their own care. These lists can be customized by practices to include new content as well as practice logos, color schemes and disclaimers. For more information, visit doctella.com.