

Preface

Lasers in Clinical Dentistry



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Guest Editors

Tremendous advances in the field of laser dentistry have occurred since the subject was last visited by the *Dental Clinics of North America*. Four years ago, dentists were just beginning to discover the usefulness of the erbium family of lasers on hard tissue. Today, those instruments are used for osseous surgeries and apicoectomies and for operative dentistry on deciduous and permanent teeth. More laser companies are entering the field, offering the profession more choices, including more laser tips and similar accessories for performing more procedures than ever before. Laser dentistry, formerly embraced only by the specialty of oral and maxillofacial surgery, has been the subject of a favorable position paper by a blue-ribbon panel of the American Academy of Periodontology. The American Academy of Endodontists also has come out with a statement on the use of lasers in their field. We are confident that other specialty boards soon will follow.

Every discipline of dentistry has been positively affected by laser technology. From pediatric and operative dentistry to periodontics, prosthetics to cosmetics and implantology, lasers have made a tremendous impact on the delivery of dental care in the twenty-first century and will continue to do so as the technology continues to improve and evolve. This issue of the *Dental Clinics of North America* brings together specialists from every discipline in dentistry. Their mandates in writing the articles were to discuss the use of every wavelength currently available and how they are used in the delivery of superior patient care. The information in each article is presented in such a way that it can be taken right off of the page and incorporated into treatment plans immediately.

An undertaking of this magnitude cannot be completed without the support of many people. We thank our contributing authors for the magnificent work on their articles, in some cases, even in the face of personal adversity. We also thank John Vassallo, our editor at Elsevier. Finally, we thank our spouses, Catherine Coluzzi and Dr. Ellen Goldstein, and our children, Craig, Alex, and Dana Convissar, for their love, understanding, patience, and compassion during this most worthwhile project.

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