

# Practice Advisor: Finding the Right Fit for Any Office

Hemangiomas

Photorejuvenation

**Tattoo Removal**

**Body Shaping**

Hair removal Leg Vein

Pigmented lesions Wrinkles

**Scars**

Dyschromia

Pseudo Folliculitis Barbae

Telangiectasia

Solar Lentingines

Port Wine Stains

**Rosacea**

Fine lines



# Laser Hair Removal: Efficiency, Efficacy, and Comfort Are Key

BY GIRISH (GILLY) MUNAVALLI, MD

Laser hair removal is one of the top three most popular aesthetic services requested by patients in the US, and is also among the highest-reimbursed procedures. Many established and growing dermatology practices may find that laser hair removal is an attractive addition to their service menu. Of course, due to patient considerations, laser hair removal is not a good fit for every practice (see the sidebar for some important considerations). Yet, some practices that would likely benefit from the inclusion of laser hair removal have been reluctant to embrace the service due to perceived limitations of the laser systems themselves. The LightSheer Duet system (Lumenis) is a two-in-one system that has streamlined laser hair removal treatment in my practice and allows for a patient-friendly, practice-enhancing experience.

## THE SYSTEM

The LightSheer is a diode laser equipped with two handpieces. The smaller, 9x9mm spot size LightSheer ET handpiece with cooling head is ideal for application to small treatment areas, such as the face. The 22x35mm spot size LightSheer HS handpiece—the largest of any diode laser on the market—is ideal for rapid treatment of large treatment areas. Either handpiece can be easily connected to the same platform, so that either or both handpieces can be used to treat a given patient without the need to reboot the system.

The large 23x 35mm handpiece features vacuum-assist technology, which contributes to better outcomes and

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reduced discomfort associated with therapy. In fact, there is no need for use of topical anesthesia when using the LightSheer HS handpiece. This means that patients and physicians can avoid the significant time delays (45 minutes up to an hour) associated with waiting for anesthetic to take effect.

By drawing the skin up to the handpiece tip, the vacuum technology helps to reduce the distance between the laser source and the hair follicle that it targets. The handpiece also physically stretches the skin, which effectively reduces the pigment density in the treatment site and diminishes competition for the laser energy. As such, the LightSheer can efficiently target the follicle with less energy than is required by other systems.<sup>1</sup> This contributes to reduced heat and increased patient comfort and safety.<sup>2</sup>

In most cases, the cooling handpiece of the LightSheet ET is sufficient to allow for comfortable patient treatment. In some cases, additional anesthetic may be used, if desired.

The LightSheer Duet has been demonstrated effective across all skin types.<sup>3</sup> In my experience, I have used the laser in skin types I through IV with good results and no untoward effects.

## WHY TWO?

There are several practical benefits to the availability of two handpieces on the LightSheer Duet. As noted, the smaller handpiece is generally ideal for small treatment areas, such as on the face, while the larger handpiece facilitates treatment of the back in about 15 minutes. This is exceptionally quick, and likely about two to three times faster than the speed of treatment with other available systems.

### EXPERT PERSPECTIVES:

*“When you combine the vacuum machine and the diode system, the answer is safety, safety, safety.”*

Learn more. Visit [DermTube.com](http://DermTube.com) to watch Expert Perspectives.

<http://dermtube.com/series/lumenis/rafael-nunes-md-on-lightsheer-duet-and-acupulse/>



## CONSIDERING LASER HAIR REMOVAL?

**Assess local demand.** Laser hair removal remains one of the most sought-after cosmetic services. Just be sure there is enough demand among your current and potential patients.

**Know local regulations.** Allow non-physicians to administer treatment only after a physician consultation and when the physician is on-site.

**Educate patients.** Patients must understand they will require four to six initial treatments and likely regular touch-ups. If patients tend to tan or spend a good deal of time outdoors, laser hair removal may be contraindicated.

**Evaluate systems.** Look for a system that offers efficacy, speed, and comfort.

**Reserve space.** It's best to have a dedicated, comfortable hair removal treatment area that patients will not mind visiting many times over the course of treatment.

**Prepare the space.** Be sure to have adequate ventilation and an air purification system.

**Choose the right support.** Consider a service contract with regular maintenance.

In clinical reality, the versatility of two handpieces is beneficial. With repeated treatments on larger areas, hair will become lighter, finer, and less dense.<sup>2</sup> At this point, patients will no longer require treatment of the entire back, for example. Instead, they simply need targeted application to these persistent areas. The smaller handpiece is particularly well suited to these treatments.

## PATIENT SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT

Laser hair removal can be safely performed across virtually all skin types. However, it should not be performed when the skin is darkened due to melanin activation via UV exposure. Patients must be prepared to practice UV avoidance in advance of treatment; and treatment should be postponed for individuals with "a tan."

Proper expectation-building is also important. There has been some dialogue regarding permanent hair reduction versus permanent hair removal. In our practice, we advise patients that they will require four to six initial treatment sessions to achieve optimal hair removal. While there is a permanent reduction in the amount of hair at treatment sites, there will be some degree or regrowth of finer, lighter hairs over time. In most cases, touch-up treatments are provided at four to six month intervals.

It is also important in marketing and patient education initiatives to establish the skill of the practice and the merits of the device. Many spas and hair removal centers across the country offer laser hair removal, but these may be provided with older systems that take close to two hours to administer, including numbing and active treatment time, and these systems may offer reduced efficacy. Clear benefits of LightSheer treatment are the speed of treatment and patient comfort.

Local regulations will determine whether treatment must be administered by a physician or whether a PA/NP, nurse, or medical technician can administer treatments. Even in states where a non-physician can administer treatment, it is prudent to have the physician evaluate all patients and set treatment parameters and to allow non-physicians to administer treatments only when the physician is on-site. This is what I do in my practice, and it is a good way to distinguish care at the medical practice from that provided at a spa.

## THE POWER OF TWO

With its two easily interchangeable handpieces, the LightSheer Duet allows for efficient and effective hair removal on various anatomic sites. The large 22x35mm spot size LightSheer HS handpiece allows for rapid treatment of larger body areas, while the vacuum assist feature is associated with increased comfort and efficacy.

Physicians who administer laser hair removal with the LightSheer diode laser in their practices can offer patients a comfortable experience, rapid treatment, consistent and dependable efficacy, and the assurance of physician supervised treatment. With its proven efficacy and speed of treatment,<sup>1-3</sup> the LightSheer duet system ensures high levels of patient and physician satisfaction. ■

1. Halachmi S, Lapidot M. Low-fluence vs. standard fluence hair removal: a contralateral control non-inferiority study. *J Cosmet Laser Ther.* 2012 Feb;14(1):2-6.

2. Ibrahim OA, Kilmer SL. Long-term clinical evaluation of a 800-nm long-pulsed diode laser with a large spot size and vacuum-assisted suction for hair removal. *Dermatol Surg.* 2012 Jun;38(6):912-7.

3. Zhou ZC, Guo LF, Gold MH. Hair removal utilizing the LightSheer Duet HS hand piece and the LightSheer ET: a comparative study of two diode laser systems in Chinese women. *J Cosmet Laser Ther.* 2011 Dec;13(6):283-90.