



HOW TO ADD

# Laser Tattoo Removal to Your Practice



AN EBOOK FROM 

## **How to Add Laser Tattoo Removal to Your Practice**

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# Table of Contents

- How to Add Laser Tattoo Removal to Your Practice .....1**
- How Laser Tattoo Removal Works .....2
- How Long It Takes to Successfully Remove a Tattoo .....2
- Benefits of Adding Laser Tattoo Removal to a Practice .....3
  - The Potential Profit*.....3
  - Low Costs*.....3
- Regulations on Laser Tattoo Removal .....4
- Space Required for Laser Tattoo Removal .....4
- Choosing the Right Tattoo Removal Machine.....5
- Hiring Properly Trained Staff.....5
- Marketing the Tattoo Removal Treatments .....5
- What to Expect from the Laser Tattoo Removal Procedure .....5
- Laser Tattoo Removal Side Effects .....6
- Precautions to Take After the Tattoo Removal Treatment.....8
- Popular Tattoo Removal Machines in the Market.....8
  - The Passive Laser*.....8
  - The Active Laser*.....8
  - Q-Switched Ruby Laser*.....8
  - Q-Switched ND-YAG Laser*.....9
  - Q-Switched Alexandrite Laser*.....9
  - Discovery PICO™ Series*.....10
- About the International Association for Physicians in Aesthetic Medicine (IAPAM).....11**

## How to Add Laser Tattoo Removal to Your Practice



Tattoos are appealing to people of all ages, genders and races. It has become very popular in the United States particularly due to many celebrities and sportspersons choosing to get inked. The statistics indicate a rise in number of tattoos which shows the potential for the laser tattoo removal market to grow.

As tattoos are growing in popularity, the awareness for laser tattoo removal has also improved. There is an increasing demand for the procedure making it profitable for all those who are in the practice. There is a huge market for laser tattoo removal amongst people of all ages with the number of tattoo shops cropping up and all mainstream culture icons inking themselves.

‘Tattoo regret’ is also a prevalent phenomenon and many people regret the tattoos they got in their youth. Since the safest and most effective solution to this problem is laser tattoo removal, there is a high demand for it. Affluent sectors of the organization are regularly choosing to have this aesthetic procedure done which is why laser tattoo removal is now also offered at spas as a cosmetic treatment.



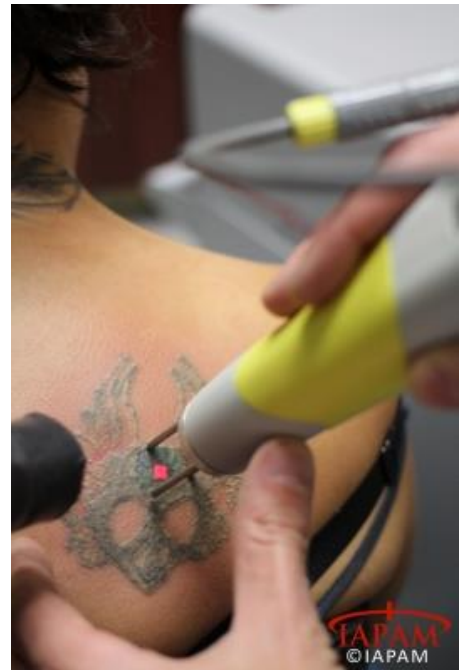


### **How Laser Tattoo Removal Works**

The most widely approved and effective tattoo removal procedure is the laser treatment. The laser is a beam of light that safely enters the skin and breaks up the ink particles leading to fading of the tattoo. The immune system then removes the inks with time. Laser energy is completely harmless and only targets the inks in the skin, not having any effect on the surrounding un-inked skin. Another tattoo removal treatment is Intense Pulsed Light. Using this method, specific laser wavelengths are used to remove different colors of ink.

### **How Long It Takes to Successfully Remove a Tattoo**

It requires multiple sessions to completely remove the tattoo. The number depends on the size and area of the tattoo. Because the body has to eliminate the fragmented pigment using its scavenger cells, a gap of at least three weeks is maintained between sessions to allow the natural process to occur.



## Benefits of Adding Laser Tattoo Removal to a Practice

### *The Potential Profit*

Patients coming in for laser tattoo removal are usually motivated by their desire to remove their tattoos and therefore pay premiums on each session. An average procedure for tattoo removal costs around \$200 for an appointment that only takes 15 minutes to complete. In practice, this is average revenue of \$800 per hour.

Most tattoos require at least 5 and at most 10 treatment sessions to achieve a complete removal. For the average patient who has a small or medium-sized tattoo the complete laser tattoo removal cost would be around \$1000 to \$2000 and most patients have no trouble paying this amount if it means getting rid of something about their appearance they do not like.

### *Low Costs*

The cost of adding laser tattoo removal services to an existing practice are minimum and only include the purchase of the tattoo removal machine and hiring of staff. The space required will be discussed below and in most cases, would not require purchasing or renting another office. Tattoo removal machines are small in size and with the patient chair it can easily be accommodated in a small room.





Laser tattoo removal treatment does not have any consumable costs attached to it such as ointments or bandages so it is a very profitable practice for the owners.

### **Regulations on Laser Tattoo Removal**

The first and foremost order of business before launching a laser tattoo removal center is to check the State regulations on the procedure. There are certain laws regarding who can own or operate tattoo removal machines which vary from state to state. Some states only allow a medical professional i.e. physician, nurse, assistant etc. to handle the equipment while others require only a medical director to oversee the operations.

In some states, there are clear laws created regarding laser tattoo removal published by the state medical board. However, many areas also have ambiguous laws that are not specific to tattoo removal treatments. Therefore, it is important to do research on the topic with due diligence and consult with a legal attorney who can offer their professional opinion.

### **Space Required for Laser Tattoo Removal**

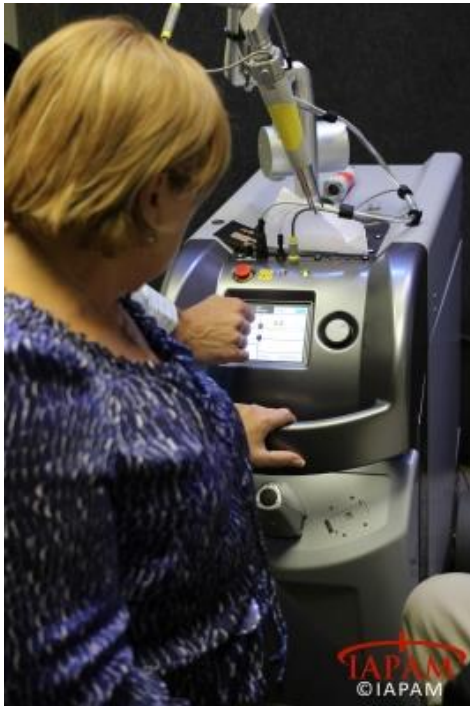
A laser tattoo removal practice requires adequate space on the premises. If the office is not big enough than a bigger facility should be invested in to house all the equipment and cater to the patients coming in. It is best to make use of the space that is already available and invest in a better place after a certain amount of cash flow is maintained.

The laser tattoo removal procedure requires a small reception or waiting area for patients, which most clinics already have. An office area for consultations and a treatment room where the equipment is kept and tattoo removal procedures performed.

## Choosing the Right Tattoo Removal Machine

When buying equipment, one must decide which features are most important. This includes prioritizing on the ink colors the tattoo removal machine should be effective for, the time required to warm up the machine and the additional features that one is willing to pay for.

A responsible manufacturer provides consultation and support for the laser tattoo removal clinic as the company grows. They also include marketing services.



## Hiring Properly Trained Staff

The operation of a laser tattoo removal clinic requires at least two staff members i.e. an office manager for scheduling appointments and managing the reception area and a technician. During the initial stage, the volume of patients is low so a single person can take care of both duties.

If a medical director is required, then one should be contracted and an agreement made before the premises opens. It is important to have the necessary staff present at the time the tattoo removal machine is purchased so that the on-site training can begin immediately.

Incentives should be offered to the staff in order to motivate them to achieve certain targets. This encourages them to bring in more patients and increase their earning potential as well as improve the practice' performance.

## Marketing the Tattoo Removal Treatments

Existing cosmetic clinics and medical spas already have an established popularity amongst men and women alike. Unlike traditional beauty salons and spas, a medical spa can offer cosmetic as well as medical laser treatments, hence laser tattoo removal would be a suitable addition to the facility. Since most of the patients at such a facility are beauty focused they are bound to seek a procedure that improves their appearance.

Offering tattoo removal treatment would allow the owners to attract existing as well as new patients. The most common type of patients seeking tattoo removal are young women in their 20s. These women would also be seeking other aesthetic and cosmetic procedures. By offering different types of services, medical and cosmetic spas can create bundle offers and package deals to convince patients to choose more than one procedure. For example, hair removal and laser tattoo removal can be bundled together to target certain patients.

## What to Expect from the Laser Tattoo Removal Procedure

Patients must be briefed prior to the treatment to help them prepare themselves accordingly. Most patients experience some discomfort and pain during the tattoo removal treatment. If a patient is very sensitive to pain, then a certain topical can be applied to their skin. This high strength gel contains the anesthetic



Lidocaine in a 10.56% concentration. The topical has to be applied at least one or two hours before the tattoo removal procedure to allow the skin to get numb.



It is common for the tattoo to become white after a tattoo removal treatment. This phenomenon is known as frosting and is caused by carbon dioxide being released on the surface of the skin by the upper layers after the laser penetrates it. The reaction shows that the laser has penetrated the ink successfully and indicates a normal reaction of the body's natural healing process. The white frosting can be seen after the first session but will not be very prominent as the ink is further removed during future sessions.

### **Laser Tattoo Removal Side Effects**

There are certain side-effects which are commonly experienced after a laser tattoo removal procedure. It is important to guide the patient truthfully and answer any questions and concerns that may arise during consultation. The tattoo removal side effects vary from patient to patient depending on their skin type and tattoo size.

It is normal for the area that has been lasered to swell up, however inflammation can be diminished by elevating the area and resting as much as possible. Icing also helps subside the swelling but the ice pack should be wrapped in a cloth and only be applied to the area for a maximum of five minutes at a time to prevent freeze burn.



(photo credit: tattooremovalinstitute.com)

There is also visible redness immediately after the tattoo removal treatment that can last up to 72 hours. Patients who suffer redness for a longer period of time should consult a doctor as soon as possible. It is also possible that minimum or moderate prick point bleeding occurs after the tattoo removal procedure though it is only bleeding within the skin. The inflamed area is tender to the touch and very much similar in appearance and precautions to a sunburn i.e. sunblock or aloe vera can be used to soothe the area.

Blisters are a side effect for some devices but common with the wrong equipment (e.g. i.e. the wrong laser wavelengths or wrong pulse durations). Patients with sensitive skin are also prone to blistering. The blister usually looks like a bubble on top of the skin and can occur on the treated area as well its surroundings. It is highly recommended that the blisters are not popped since they provide protection from infections to the skin underneath them. If the blister is popped the area might become infected. The blister contains water and tattoo ink so they are often the same color as the tattoo which is nothing to be alarmed about. They might look terrible but actually signify that the healing process is underway.

It is very common to experience an itching sensation in the treated area but scratching it should be avoided at all costs since it can result in scarring. If the itching is severe then an over-the-counter antihistamine can be taken to get some relief.

After the blisters subside there is crusting, scabbing and dryness but if a patient skips the blistering they may directly reach this stage of the healing process. The crusting makes the ink look darker which makes patients think their treatment is not working and worries them immensely. However, this only indicates that the body is performing in a natural way and flushing out the particles of ink. It is vital not to scratch these scabs as permanent scars can form on the skin.

People who bruise easily will likely experience bruising depending upon the area where the tattoo is. If a patient bruises after their tattoo is formed then there are high chances of them bruising after the tattoo removal procedure. If the bruise is tender to the touch, care should be taken to avoid straining that area in any way.

## Precautions to Take After the Tattoo Removal Treatment

It is important to take the necessary steps to prevent infections from forming, prevent laser tattoo side effects from escalating or the texture of skin from changing. An antibiotic ointment should be applied on the treated area three times a day and it should remain covered with a dressing for at least two to three days after the procedure. It is advisable to avoid entering direct sunlight a few days following the procedure and to apply generous amounts of sunblock if that is unavoidable. Using cosmetic products such as makeup on the area should generally be avoided as it can lead to an infection. Also as a precautionary measure the patient should not take hot baths soon after the treatment.

## Popular Tattoo Removal Machines in the Market

### *The Passive Laser*

Passive laser tattoo removal machines are much cheaper and can be easily purchased by small salons and parlors. However, as the name suggests the machine uses a passive laser and it does not emit an intense beam. This leaves the tattoo only slightly faded and not completely removed. Since the price is very low many low-end facilities use this equipment however, it is important not to be fooled by the low-price tag and avoid this equipment if one is interested in removing stronger and ink heavy tattoos.

### *The Active Laser*

Active laser tattoo removal machines use the best techniques to get rid of tattoos forever. They employ a Q-switched laser to break down ink pigments into even smaller particles which are then removed by the immune system of the human body. It is the most effective method to remove tattoos since it leaves no trace of ink on the skin. The active laser is most effective at removing darker colors such as blue and black but it is not very effective at fading light colors like yellow or pink. Even though the price is much higher it is worth it since there are minimal side-effects after the treatment.

### *Q-Switched Ruby Laser*



(photo credit: astanzalaser.com)

The Q-switched ruby laser is the best tattoo removal machine on the market for aqua blue and green inks. This laser was solely developed for tattoo removal. The wavelength of the Q-switched Ruby is measured in nanoseconds which is what makes it much more effective at removing the darker and stubborn colors. This machine can successfully remove aqua blue and green ink but will not fare well with blue/black, yellow and red colors.



(photo credit: <https://quantausa.com/products/quanta-q-plus-c/>)

### ***Q-Switched ND-YAG Laser***

The Q-switched ND-YAG Laser releases a beam of light which is visible to the human eye. It contains the element Neodymium doped with Yttrium, Aluminum and Garnet. This laser is most effective at removing all types of colored pigments from the skin. The Q-switched ND-YAG laser not only helps remove the black, blue and grey ink but can also remove red, yellow and orange too.

If the laser contains a KTP crystal, or Potassium Titanyl Phosphate, or more commonly known as the 532 wavelengths, this will double the frequency of the emitted laser light to remove red, orange, and yellow.

### ***Q-Switched Alexandrite Laser***



(photo credit: [syneron-candela.com](http://syneron-candela.com))

Q-switched Alexandrite is effective at removing tattoos. It can remove black, green and blue ink pigments. Green color is tough to remove and often left behind when using other laser tattoo removal machines. Since this is a Q-switched laser it is very safe and does not produce any ill side effects. This treatment is similar to the Q-Switched Ruby lasers therefore the Q-Switched Alexandrite lasers will only remove aqua blue and green colored inks. They will not remove blue/black or any other colors.



## *Discovery PICO™ Series*



Discovery PICO™ Series combines industry-leading peak power, the efficacy and speed of picosecond pulses with the proven profile of nanosecond Q-switched pulses across three primary laser wavelengths. This unique feature allows for fast and effective treatment of benign pigmented lesions and all treatable tattoo colors. This ultra-high specification achieves the optimum photomechanical effect – which helps to increase the speed at which the laser shatters tattoo pigment particles. Ultimately, helping to reduce the number of treatments needed. This is the only single device system that will effectively remove all treatable tattoo colors and offers both Pico and Nano second emission modes for the safest treatment on all skin types.

(photo credit: quantausa.com)

## **About the International Association for Physicians in Aesthetic Medicine (IAPAM)**

The International Association for Physicians in Aesthetic Medicine is a voluntary association of physicians and supporters, which sets standards for the aesthetic medical profession. The goal of the association is to offer education, ethical standards, credentialing, and member benefits. IAPAM membership is open to all licensed medical doctors (MDs) and doctors of osteopathic medicine (DOs). Information about the association can be accessed through IAPAM's website at <http://www.IAPAM.com>. Additional information about the Symposium can be accessed through <http://www.aestheticmedicinesymposium.com> or by contacting:

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