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Study Finds Zeno Device Safe and Effective for Treating Acne

Preliminary results of a three-site, randomized clinical study indicate that the Zeno device from Tyrell, Inc. (Houston, Texas) is a safe and effective handheld device for treating individual mild to moderate acne blemishes with localized low-level heat.

"Results are similar to the first clinical trial, which was a single-site study in Texas," said lead author Michael Gold, M.D., owner of Gold Skin Care Center in Nashville, Tenn. "Zeno has demonstrated that heat makes acne go away. This is nothing new. But Zeno is a technological advance that emits specifically targeted heat to a specific lesion. Zeno definitely makes pimples disappear at a faster rate than on their own."

"A significant number of patients appeared to have a more rapid resolution of their acne."

The battery operated Zeno applies heat to the skin via a small metal tip. The controlled temperature setting ranges from 46.5° to 49° C. Preliminary results of the second study are scheduled to be presented in April at the annual meeting of the *American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery (ASLMS)* in Boston.

Each of the three clinical sites enrolled 10 to 15 patients. Subjects had to have two similar like-sized and like-aged acne lesions. One lesion was treated with the active device, the other with placebo. Treatment was performed three times; twice on the first day and

once again on the following day. Follow-up assessments occurred on day five and day ten.

"Anytime we can incorporate technology into our practice, it is a good thing for everyone," Dr. Gold stated. "Patients are happy with Zeno because they can apply treatment at home without using medicine. Patients also like the convenience of Zeno. It is easy to keep in your purse or pocket or briefcase. And from a doctor's perspective, patients are no longer picking at their acne. Treatment may avoid some permanent scarring."

"This is a very practical study, showing the use of Zeno on a daily basis in a regular practice," stated co-author Mitchel Goldman, M.D., medical director at Dermatology/Cosmetic Laser Associates of La Jolla, Inc. and La Jolla SpaMD, in La Jolla, Calif. "The results were surprisingly effective. A significant number of patients appeared to have a more rapid resolution of their acne. Zeno is a very simple device that works. Patients use this device three times within a 24 hour period. Localized, sustained heat is bacteriostatic. Zeno also incorporates the Goldilocks phenomenon; heat is not too cold, not too hot."

Dr. Goldman noted that it often takes an acne lesion four or five days to resolve on its own. "With Zeno, however, lesions disappear within one or two days. This shortened time frame is very significant to women. We have had total patient acceptance. We sell dozens of units a month. We have yet to have a single patient return the machine device or for a patient to complain. Patients have been uniformly pleased with the results."

Both teenagers and adults have embraced Zeno. "There is no pain associated with treatment, and to date I have seen no adverse events," Dr. Goldman said. ■

Acne Lesions Now Treated at Home with Zeno

BY MICHAEL MORETTI, EDITOR

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The battery operated Zeno device from Tyrell, Inc. (Houston, Texas) is proving to be a popular and effective home use remedy for treating individual acne lesions. "The Zeno is a localized, quick fix for the person who develops an occasional inflammatory acne lesion," said Michael Gold, M.D., a dermatologist in private practice in Nashville, Tenn. "This device generates a certain amount of heat which is not enough to burn the skin, but enough to cause damage to the *P. acnes* and destroy the acne lesion."

"This device allows patients to resolve lesions more quickly in a safe way without scarring."

Dr. Gold and his associates recently completed a clinical study of the Zeno device involving 20 patients. For the controlled trial, patients received two or three in-office treatments over two days, either with heat from the device or no heat. Follow-up was at five and ten days after the final session. "There is no question that heat is the beneficial component of the Zeno," Dr. Gold reported. "Statistically, lesions are reduced over a short period of time."

Dr. Gold predicted that the Zeno is the first of many handheld home devices for acne that will blanket the marketplace over the next few years. "Being able to effectively incorporate technology into a simple device is important to our cosmetic patients. But the Zeno is not a cure. It's just a quick fix."

In most instances, patients require only two or three sessions over a couple of days. "We sell the device in our medical spa. It is neither expensive nor cheap. It retails for a few hundred dollars," Dr. Gold noted. "For those who can afford it, I think it is a worthwhile investment. However, the Zeno is not hurting my business. It's like giving a patient medicine. That has not negatively impacted our business. Plus, I don't think any of these handheld devices are going to be suitable for patients who come to us on a regular basis. In any event, acne is not going away."

According to Mark Nestor, M.D., Ph.D., a clinical associate professor of dermatology and dermatologic surgery at the University of Miami School of Medicine in Florida, the Zeno "gives patients something to do at home without picking at their pimples. This device allows patients to resolve lesions more quickly in a safe way without scarring."

The tip of the Zeno heats to approximately 118.5° F. "The treatment itself lasts for just one or two minutes," Dr. Nestor said. "Studies show that the lesions treated are significantly reduced and disappear much more quickly. But the Zeno is mostly used in conjunction with other treatment modalities."

As of mid-October, about 50 of Dr. Nestor's patients had purchased the Zeno. "We have a lot of young kids who like the idea of treating themselves," Dr. Nestor conveyed. "We've received very positive feedback. Patients seem to have less scarring and infection with post-excoriating lesions. Patients are also more involved with their care and feel more empowered."

One Zeno disposable tip allows for about 90 treatments of individual pimples. A replacement tip costs the patient about \$35. ■