



Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation with Alma Pixel CO₂

*Interview with Dr. Femopase,
Cordoba / Argentina*

Treatment of genital areas within the aesthetic medicine has not only left any form of tabooing behind it, but has also won a continuous increasing relevance in the past years.

Thus in 2012 around 7.000 surgeries have been performed on the genital area only in Germany.

We interviewed Prof. Dr. Gabriel Alberto Femopase from the University of Cordoba, Argentina (UNC) about his practical experiences with usage of the CO₂ Laser in the case of treatments of two different feminine indications.

In your clinic you are offering a wide spectrum of surgical and aesthetical surgical procedures. What are these treatments?

Prof. Femopase:

In our private clinic we offer a range of therapeutic options for pathologies of the lower genital tract, vulvo-vaginal reconstruction (hypertrophy of labia minora, lifting of the clitoris, vulvar correction, reconstruction of pelvic muscle floor and vaginal tightening with intimate aesthetic Surgery). Another important indication is Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI) that can be effectively treated. All procedures are done using the FemiLift CO₂ Laser System.

How important is vaginal tightening or intimate aesthetic surgery to women in the 21st century?

Prof. Femopase:

The concept of quality of life is now more present in our society and sexual aspects are taken more into account by women. This results in more frequent consultations about restorative surgical alternatives. For example obstetric damages result in hyper-laxity and sensitivity alterations that are generated by damage to regional innervations, hypogastric nerve, pelvic and pudendal. This produces in 80% of women over 40 years of age some degree of sexual sensitive response dysfunction. These procedures are offered as an effective and ethical solution for these conditions.

Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI) is a widespread disease in women. What are your experiences in treating these women with the vaginal probe and the Alma CO₂?

Prof. Femopase:

SUI is another reason for very frequent consultations in daily gynecology and the use of the specially designed Alma device is an excellent option to treat this pathology. The technique is completely outpatient, low cost and does not require anesthesia, giving great results in short and long terms.

The alternative to this treatment is surgery. Which patients do you recommend a surgery, which a laser treatment?

Prof. Femopase:

The surgical procedure is limited exclusively to those patients that present cystocele or rectocele of 2nd or 3rd degree; in all other cases we use the CO₂ laser and FemiLift device.

Please describe the sequence of the Alma laser treatment.

Prof. Femopase:

Treatment Protocol:

1. Clean the treated area with gauze sponge to remove extra mucus on the treatment area.

2. Wear appropriate eye protection, as well as the medical staff inside the enclosed treatment room/ operating room. Goggles should be OD>7 and labeled for 10,600nm wavelength.
3. Set the initial energy level start-up (set up recommendations for a 30W laser system: High mode, up to 30-50mJ/pixel in the first treatment, Single Pulse).
4. Lubricate the probe with baby oil.
5. Insert a vaginal Probe; Position the hand piece perpendicular to the tissue. Do not apply pressure. The hand piece's treatment technique can be either Stationary stacking (for deeper penetration) – overlap pulses on the same area, or Multiple Passes - non-overlap passes.
6. Position the hand piece close to the tissue; trigger a laser pulse by pressing the footswitch.
7. Depth of treatment should be individualized to the tissue current condition and desired resurfacing.
8. Following treatment gently cleanse the treated area from any tissue fragments with a gauze sponge and follow postop care guidelines.
9. If adverse skin effects occur (such as excessive bleeding or swelling), you may either change the pulse mode or reduce the fluency.

How can the mechanism of action be explained?

Prof. Femopase:

Aging and overweight degrades the vaginal tissue's normal collagen and replaces it with abnormal elastic fibers that do not stretch and recoil. This creates tissue laxity. CO₂ laser removes the abnormal upper tissue layers, and stimulates new collagen growth in the dermis to effectively restructure and restore it to a state that resembles undamaged tissue. Additionally, microvascularization improves due to the effect of treatment on angiogenesis. As we modify other physiological aspects, we also achieve a rejuvenating effect on the vulvo-vaginal mucosa which leads to a normalization of vaginal pH and vaginal flora.

Which advantages does the laser procedure have? Are there any risks? What are possible side effects?

Prof. Femopase:

The advantages we obtain by these procedures are many: treatment is pain-free, minimally invasive,

outpatient, high success rate percentage, and quick recovery, not affecting normal activities for the patient. Regarding possible complications, they are nearly inexistent if the professional use the established protocols by our research group together with Alma.

Is the laser procedure able to solve the problem of SUI alone or are other actions to be taken?

Prof. Femopase:

The procedure used for SUI with Alma Lasers are highly safe and effective (with minimal side effects compared with surgical procedures as vaginal sling procedures) but other considerations like hormonal correction could be added to adjust estrogen deficit by hormonal therapies, Kegel exercises to rehabilitate the pelvic floor, etc.

What is the ratio of the cost of laser treatment compared to surgery?

Prof. Femopase:

The cost difference is very big due to the possibility to perform the procedures in outpatient way without the need of hospital stay, anesthesia etc. We also should consider the lower social cost due to patients returning to work and personal activities immediately.

Do you use the vaginal laser for other indications?

Prof. Femopase:

The device is used in all surgical vaginal procedures that require a modification of its tension and improved vaginal blood supply and lubrication. Women that undergo FemiLift treatment will be less susceptible to vaginal infections. In addition FemiLift treatment is associated with a significant improvement of sexual function. Women who suffer from Stress Urinary Incontinence have a good chance to achieve significant improvement with minimal side effects.