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Primjena lasera u dezinfekciji i čišćenju korijenskih kanala zuba: pregledni rad

The Use of Lasers in Disinfection and Cleaning of Root Canals: a Review

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Sažetak

Uspjeh endodontskog liječenja zuba ovisi o učinkovitoj dezinfekciji endodontskog prostora i prevenciji reinfekcije. Današnjim postupcima kemijsko-mehaničke obrade korijenskog kanala ne može se uvijek postići zadovoljavajuća dezinfekcija i zato cijeljenje periapikalnog procesa može biti otežano. Zbog velike energije lasera i specifične interakcije s biološkim tkivima posljednja se dva desetljeća istražuju njihova primjena u dezinfekciji i čišćenju korijenskog kanala zuba. Predstavljeni su rezultati dosadašnjih istraživanja o djelovanju Er:YAG-a, Er,Cr:YSGG-a, Nd:YAG-a i diodnog lasera na dentin korijenskog kanala te uklanjanje zaostalog sloja i bakterija. Objašnjena je i moguća uporaba laserske energije u aktivaciji tekućina u korijenskom kanalu i stvaranju specifičnih kavitacija i zvučnih strujanja. Na temelju rezultata dobivenih u dosadašnjim istraživanjima zaključeno je da laseri u korijenskom kanalu djeluju baktericidno. Budući da još ne mogu potpuno zamijeniti natrijev hipoklorit, preporučuju se kao dodatna dezinfekcija na kraju kemijsko-mehaničke obrade korijenskog kanala. Osim toga određeni laseri mogu iz korijenskih kanala ukloniti zaostali sloj i debris.

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Uvod

Ishod endodontskog liječenja zuba s kroničnim apikalnim parodontitisom ovisi o učinkovitoj dezinfekciji korijenskih kanala i prevenciji reinfekcije (1, 2). Dezinfekcija endodontskog prostora postiže se kombinacijom mehaničke instrumentacije i ispiranja različitim antimikrobnim sredstvima. Iako se mehaničkom instrumentacijom može znatno smanjiti broj bakterija u korijenskom kanalu (3), kemijska sredstva potrebna su kako bi se uklonio bakterijski biofilm iz dentinskih tubulusa i nepristupačnih dijelova endodontskog prostora. Natrijev hipoklorit (NaOCl), u koncentracijama od 0,5 do 5,25 posto, i dalje se smatra *zlatnim standardom* u dezinfekciji korijenskih kanala (4) zbog širokog antimikrobnog spektra djelovanja i jedinstvenog svojstva – otapanja organskog materijala (5). Iako se danas mogu upotrijebiti i druga antimikrobna sredstva za ispiranje korijenskog kanala kao što su klorheksidin, preparati joda, kombinirani preparati MTAD (mješavina tetraciklina, limunske kiseline i detergenta) i QMix (mješavina EDTA-e, klorheksidina i detergenta), ni jedan od navedenih dezinficijensa ne može potpuno zamijeniti NaOCl (6).

Introduction

The outcome of root canal treatment of teeth with periapical periodontitis depends on efficient disinfection of the root canal system and prevention of reinfection (1, 2). Traditionally, it is accomplished by a combination of mechanical instrumentation and the use of disinfecting solutions for irrigation. Although instrumentation alone may reduce bacterial load by mechanical removal of microorganisms and infected dentine tissue, it does not provide a bacteria free root canal (3). Therefore, much has been expected from various combinations of disinfecting solutions. Sodium hypochlorite (NaOCl) at 0.5 to 5.25% is still considered the gold standard for root canal irrigation (4) due to its wide antimicrobial spectrum of action and ability to dissolve organic tissue (5). Other antimicrobial irrigants such as chlorhexidine, potassium iodine, MTAD (a mixture of tetracycline, citric acid and a detergent) and QMix (a mixture of ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid, chlorhexidine and a detergent) have been investigated, but still not proven to be more effective than NaOCl (6).

Another important aim of the root canal irrigation is the removal of a smear layer (1 to 2 μm thick) (Fig. 1), which is

Svrha ispiranja korijenskog kanala jest, uz antimikrobnog djelovanje, ukloniti zaostali sloj (slika 1.), tj. ostatke dentinskog i pulpnog tkiva, bakterije i endotoksine koji nastaju na stijenkama kanala tijekom mehaničke instrumentacije (7). Zaostali sloj uklanja se na kraju kemijsko-mehaničke obrade korijenskog kanala 15- ili 17-postotnom otopinom etilendiamintetraoctene kiseline (EDTA) (slika 2.) ili 10-postotnom otopinom limunske kiseline (4). Uklanjanjem zaostalog sloja postiže se bolje brtvljenje korijenskog kanala s materijalom za punjenje (8, 9). Kako EDTA i limunska kiselina smanjuju antimikrobnog djelovanje NaOCl-a (10), njihova primjena tijekom instrumentacije nije opravdana, ali je nakon uklanjanja zaostalog sloja korijenski kanal potrebno još jedan put isprati nekim dezinficijensom (11).

Zbog složenosti endodontskog prostora i ograničenja konvencionalne pasivne tehnike ispiranja štrcaljkom (špricom) i iglom (12, 13), mikroorganizmi često ostaju u nepristupačnim dijelovima korijenskog kanala gdje potiču upalu i mogu spriječiti cijeljenje periapikalne lezije (14). Zbog toga se istražuju novi antimikrobeni postupci u endodontskom liječenju zuba koji bi bolje uklanjali mikroorganizme iz korijenskog kanala i dentinskih tubulusa (14). Posljednja dva desetljeća ispituju se tehnike aktivnog ispiranja kao završnog protokola dezinfekcije u endodontskom liječenju (15, 16). Pasivno ultrazvučno ispiranje (PUI) i zvučno aktivirano ispiranje pokazali su se vrlo uspješnima u uklanjanju zaostalog sloja (17, 18) i bakterijskog biofilma iz korijenskog kanala (19, 20).

Laseri omogućuju nove tehnike čišćenja i dezinfekcije korijenskog kanala (21). U dosadašnjim istraživanjima dokazana je i objašnjena interakcija valnih duljina lasera s dentinskim zidom korijenskog kanala i mikroorganizmima (21, 22). No primjena tih uredaja u kliničkoj praksi još je ograničena (23).

Svrha rada je objasniti temeljna načela interakcije lasera i tkiva u korijenskom kanalu te podastrijeti dosadašnje spoznaje o učinkovitosti i mogućim primjenama lasera u dezinfekciji i čišćenju korijenskog kanala zuba.

Interakcija lasera i tkiva

Istraživanja o djelovanju lasera u biomedicini počela su 60-ih godina prošlog stoljeća nakon što je Theodore Maiman konstruirao prvi rubinski laser. Laserska zraka je monokromatska (jedna valna duljina), koherentna (fotoni u istoj fazi), kolimirana (zraka s malim stupnjem divergencije), velikog intenziteta (24), vrlo precizna i selektivna u interakciji s biološkim tkivima (24, 25). Laseri koji se danas upotrebljavaju u medicini emitiraju valne duljine od ultraljubičastog (UV) do srednjeg infracrvenog spektra elektromagnetskog zračenja (otprilike od 200 nm do 10 μm). Laserska zraka u kontaktu s ciljanim tkivom može se odbiti od površine (refleksija), raspršiti kroz tkivo, proći kroz njega nepromijenjena (transmisija) ili apsorbirati (26). Promjene u tkivu uzrokuje apsorbirani dio svjetlosne energije koja prelazi u termičku. Količina apsorbirane laserske energije u tkivu ovisi o valnoj duljini zračenja te o optičkim i kemijskim svojstvima ciljanoga tkiva, kao što su pigmentacije (kromofori) i voda (26). Učinak

formed on the root canal walls due to the preparation, and consists of dentine debris, pulpal remnants, bacteria, endotoxins (7). The smear layer is removed by rinsing the root canals with 10 or 17% aqueous solution of ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA) (Fig. 2) or 10% citric acid at the end of mechanical instrumentation (4), thus achieving a closer interface between obturation materials and dentine walls (8, 9). Since EDTA and citric acid reduce the antimicrobial effect of NaOCl (10), a final rinse with a disinfecting solution after the smear layer removal is beneficial (11).

Due to the complex intracanal anatomy and the limitations of the syringe/needle irrigation technique (12, 13), new adjunctive antibacterial therapeutic strategies have been recommended to target residual microorganisms and thus enhance the healing rates of teeth with periapical periodontitis (14). Over the last two decades, different irrigant agitation techniques have been introduced as final irrigation protocols in endodontic treatment (15, 16). Passive ultrasonic irrigation (PUI) and sonic activated irrigation have been reported to be efficient in the removal of the intracanal smear layer and debris (17, 18), and to facilitate the disruption of endodontic biofilms (19, 20).

Relatively new approaches to disinfecting and cleaning the root canals include lasers (21). The effects of several laser wavelengths on the root canal walls and endodontic microorganisms have already been investigated (21, 22). However, the acceptance of laser technology by clinicians still remains limited (23). The aim of this review is to explain basic principles of the interaction between laser and biological tissue in root canals and to present current knowledge and scientific status of the laser efficacy in root canal disinfection and cleanliness.

Laser tissue interaction

Biomedical applications of lasers have been under investigation since Theodore Maiman used the first Ruby laser in 1960. Commercially available medical laser wavelengths cover a short band in the electromagnetic spectrum, ranging from ultraviolet (UV) to mid-infra-red (IR) (approximately 200 nm to 10 μm). The laser beam is, due to its monochromaticity (single wavelength), coherence (photons in phase), collimation (very low beam divergence) and intensity (24), highly precise and selective in interaction with biological tissues (24, 25). When a laser beam interacts with tissue, it can be reflected, transmitted, scattered and absorbed in varying proportions (26). The absorbed laser energy is particularly important because it transforms into thermal energy and causes changes inside the tissue. The total amount of laser energy, which will be absorbed, depends on the laser wavelength and the optical characteristics of the target tissue, such as pigmentation (chromophores) and water con-

apsorbirane energije u ciljanom tkivu može se kontrolirati parametrima lasera:

- 1.) energijom pulsa;
- 2.) načinom emitiranja energije [kontinuirani val (cw) ili pulsno zračenje];
- 3.) promjerom laserske zrake na tkivu;
- 4.) trajanjem pulsa i frekvencija;
- 5.) vodenim hlađenjem.

Promjene fizičkih svojstava tkiva, kao posljedice laserskog zračenja određenih parametara, mogu utjecati i na daljnji učinak lasera na tkivo (27).

Potencijalna korist lasera u medicini i stomatologiji ovisi o karakteristikama pojedine vrste lasera i specifičnosti ciljanoga tkiva. Fizikalna svojstva tkiva (koeficijent apsorpcije i raspršenja, termalna kondukcija, mehanička snaga, toplinski kapacitet) i parametri laserskog zračenja određuju vrstu interakcije lasera i biološkog tkiva (28). Ako je gustoća energije mala, djelovanje lasera na tkivo je optičko ili je kombinacija optičkoga i fotokemijskog ili fotobiomodulativnog učinka. Pri većim energijama lasera dominira fototermički učinak. Fotomehanički učinak lasera u tkivu (često se još naziva i fotoakustični) nastaje kada se velika energija zračenja emitira tijekom vrlo kratkih pulseva (nano- i pikosekunde) (27). Može se zaključiti da dulje lasersko zračenje male energije manje razara od zračenja većeg intenziteta emitiranog u vrlo kratkim pulsevima. Štoviše, postoji određena granica u količini prenesene energije koja je potrebna za određeni tip interakcije lasera s tkivom (28).

Laseri u endodonciji

Laser je u endodonciji prvi put upotrijebljen 1971. godine kada su Weichman i Johnson (29) pokušali *in vitro* zatvoriti apikalni otvor ugljično dioksidnim (CO_2) laserom. Od tada je objavljeno mnogo istraživanja o mogućoj primjeni različitih lasera u endodonciji (30). No njihova klinička upotreba počela je tek potkraj 90-ih godina prošlog stoljeća kada su razvijeni novi tanki i fleksibilni fiberoptički nastavci za prijenos laserske zrake u korijenski kanal. Upravo se zbog toga laseri danas mogu upotrijebiti za različite postupke u endodonciji – za prekrivanje pulpe/pulpotomija, čišćenje i dezinfekciju korijenskog kanala, punjenje i reviziju te u apikalnoj kirurgiji (31).

Laseri kojima se mogu čistiti i dezinficirati korijenski kanali su: erbij: itrij-aluminij-garnet (Er:YAG), 2940 nm; erbij, kromij: itrij-skandij-galij-garnet (Er,Cr:YSGG), 2780 nm; neodimij:itrij-aluminij-garnet (Nd:YAG), 1064 nm, diodni, 635 do 980 nm; i kalijev titanil fosfat (KTP), 532 nm; ugljični dioksid (CO_2), 9600 do 10 600 nm. Učinak lasera u korijenskom kanalu ovisi o apsorpcijском koeficijentu valne duljine lasera u vodi, hidroksiapatitu i ostalim pigmentiranim supstancijama (mikroorganizmi). Valne duljine vidljivog i blizu-infracrvenog elektromagnetskog zračenja (Nd:YAG, diode, laseri KTP) slabo se apsorbiraju u vodi i hidroksiapatitu zbog čega prodiru duboko i djeluju baktericidno u dentinu. Suprotno tomu, blizu-infracrveno zračenje erbij-lasera, koje se dobro apsorbira u vodi i hidroksiapatitu, djeluje na površini dentinskog zida korijenskog kanala

tent (26). The effect of the absorbed laser energy in the target tissue can be controlled by the irradiation parameters: 1) irradiance or pulse energy; 2) mode of energy emission (continuous wave (cw) or pulse irradiation); 3) laser beam size on the tissue; 4) laser pulse length and repetition rate; 5) the use of water spray. In addition, any change in the physical properties of the tissue, as a result of laser irradiation with certain parameters, can also influence the effect of the laser tissue interaction (27).

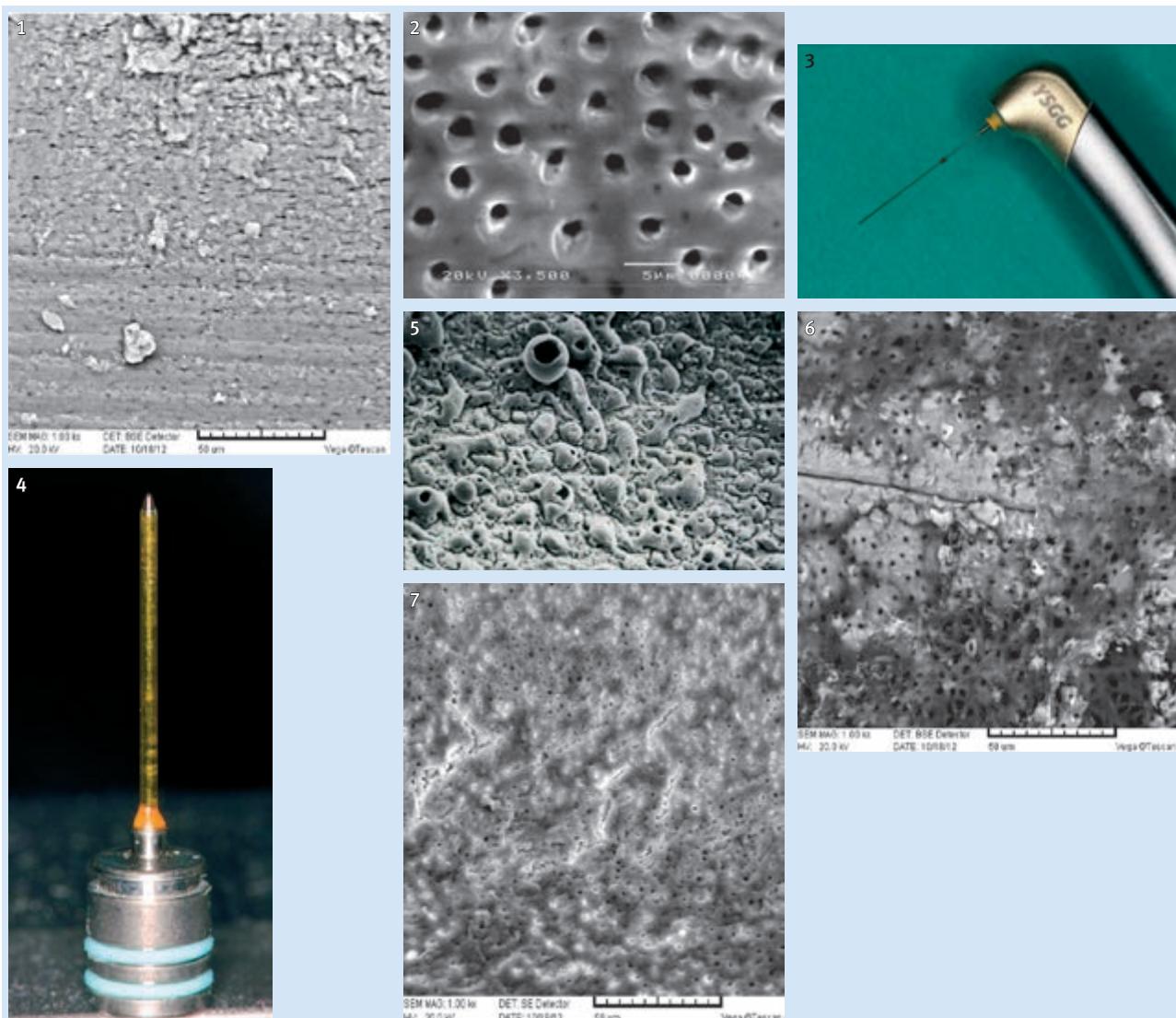
Potencijalna korist lasera u medicini i dentistriji depends on the particular properties of each type of laser and the specific target tissue. The physical properties of the tissue (absorption and scattering coefficient, thermal conductivity, mechanical strength, heat capacity) and laser irradiation parameters govern the course of laser-tissue interactions (28). At low irradiances and/or energies, laser tissue interactions are either purely optical, or a combination of optical and photochemical or photobiomodulative effect. When laser power is increased, photothermal interactions start to dominate. Finally, photomechanical (sometimes referred to as photoacoustic) effects become apparent when repetitive and very short laser pulses with high pulse energy are delivered to the tissue (27).

It can be concluded that laser light irradiation of relatively low intensity during longer time is less destructive than those applied for short-duration at high intensities. Moreover, there is a minimal level or threshold of energy required for specific types of interaction to occur (28).

Lasers in endodontics

The first use of laser in endodontics was reported by Weichman and Johnson in 1971 (29) who attempted to seal the apical foramen *in vitro* with a high power carbon dioxide (CO_2) laser. Since then, many papers on laser use in endodontics have been published (30). However, the clinical application of lasers in endodontics started in the late 90s when the new delivery systems, including thin and flexible fibres and endodontic tips, were developed. Today, lasers can be used in various endodontic procedures such as: pulp capping/pulpotomy, cleaning and disinfecting the root canal system, obturation, endodontic retreatment, and apical surgery (31).

The laser wavelengths described for cleaning and disinfecting the root canal system are: erbium: yttrium aluminium garnet (Er:YAG), 2940 nm; erbium, chromium: yttrium scandium gallium garnet (Er,Cr:YSGG), 2780 nm; neodimij:yttrium aluminium garnet (Nd:YAG), 1064 nm; diode, 635 to 980 nm; potassium titanyl phosphate (KTP), 532 nm; carbon dioxide (CO_2), 9600 and 10 600 nm. The physical effect of these lasers in root canals depends on the absorption of their wavelengths in biological components and chromophores such as water, apatite minerals, and various pigmented substances (microorganisms). Wavelengths of the visible and near-infrared electromagnetic radiation (Nd:YAG, diode, KTP lasers) are poorly absorbed in water and hydroxyapatite and have deeper bactericidal effects in dentine. On the contrary, mid-infrared erbium la-



Slika 1. SEM (x 1000) površine radikularnog dentina korijenskog kanala nakon mehaničke instrumentacije i ispiranja 2,5-postotnim NaOCl-om; vide se ostaci zaostaloga sloja

Figure 1 A SEM photograph (x 1000) of root canal wall after mechanical instrumentation and irrigation with 2.5% NaOCl, showing remaining smear layer.

Slika 2. SEM (x 3500) površine radikularnog dentina korijenskog kanala nakon mehaničke instrumentacije, ispiranja 2,5-postotnim NaOCl-om i 17-postotnom EDTA-om; vide se otvoreni dentinski tubuli

Figure 2 A SEM photograph (x 3500) of root canal wall after final rinsing the root canal with 17% EDTA following mechanical instrumentation and irrigation with 2.5% NaOCl. A root canal wall with open dentinal tubules is seen.

Slika 3. Nastavak za laser Er,Cr:YSGG s koničnim nastavkom *side firing fiber* za primjenu u endodonciji (promjer 200 µm)

Figure 3 Handpiece for the Er,Cr:YSGG laser with conical side firing fibre tip for endodontic use (200 µm in diameter).

Slika 4. Nastavak *Side firing fiber* s modificiranim bočnim zidom (promjer 600 µm) koji se rabi u koronarnom dijelu korijenskog kanala za fotonsko inicirajuće fotoakustično strujanje (engl. *photon-initiated photoacoustic streaming – PIPS*)

Figure 4 Radial firing fibre tip with stripped side wall (600 µm in diameter) which is used in the coronal part of root canal for photon initiated photoacoustic streaming (PIPS).

Slika 5. SEM (x 3000) površine radikularnog dentina korijenskog kanala nakon zračenja laserom Nd:YAG; vide se područja otapanja površine dentina koja se uzdižu u obliku mjeđurića i znakovi rekristalizacije

Figure 5 A SEM photograph (x 3000) of a Nd:YAG-lased dentine surface. A melted bubbled area with signs of recrystallization is observed.

Slika 6. SEM (x 3000) površine radikularnog dentina korijenskog kanala nakon zračenja diodnim laserom; korijenski kanal je prije toga tijekom mehaničke instrumentacije ispran 2,5-postotnim NaOCl-om; vide se otvoreni dentinski tubuli s ostatcima debrisa i znakovima otapanja površine dentina

Figure 6 A SEM photograph (x 3000) of a dentine surface after irradiation with the diode laser. The root canal was previously rinsed with 2.5% NaOCl during mechanical preparation. Open dentinal tubules are found next to a melted surface area and some remaining debris.

Slika 7. SEM (x 3000) površine radikularnog dentina korijenskog kanala nakon zračenja laserom Er,Cr:YSGG; površina je bez zaostalog sloja i s otvorenim dentinskim tubulusima

Figure 7 A SEM photograph (x 3000) of an Er,Cr:YSGG lased dentine. The surface is without the smear layer and open dentinal tubules are seen.

pa se koristi za uklanjanje zaostalog sloja i bakterijskog biofilma (32).

Nekoliko je ograničenja i nedostataka u endodontskoj primjeni lasera. Laserska zraka se nakon izlaska iz fiberoptičkog nastavka ravnog završetka emitira pravocrtno s vrlo malim kutom divergencije od 18 do 20 stupnjeva (22), pa je teško postići ravnomjerno zračenje cijele dentinske stijenke korijenskog kanala (22, 33). Osim toga pravocrtna emisija energije može biti opasna kod revizije ili instrumentacije u zavinutim korijenskim kanalima jer može nastati intrakanalna stepenica ili perforacija (34, 35). Zbog toga se, tijekom postupka dezinfekcije korijenskog kanala laserom, preporučuje pomicanje fiberoptičkog nastavka kružnim pokretima od apikalne strane prema koronarnoj kako bi se postiglo ravnomjerno zračenje dentinskog zida i sprječila eventualna termička oštećenja (36). Za tu svrhu konstruirani su konični endodontski nastavci (engl. *side-firing*) koji emitiraju 20 posto ukupne energije pravocrtno, a 80 posto lateralno (37) (slike 3. i 4.). Ako se erbij-laserom radi u korijenskom kanalu treba paziti i na moguće pregrijavanje periradikularnog tkiva kroz apikalni otvor (38).

Nd:YAG

Laser Nd:YAG (1064 nm) naistraživaniji je uređaj u području dezinfekcije korijenskog kanala. Njegovo antimikrobično djelovanje temelji se na zagrijavanju bakterija (preko bakterijskih koromofora koji upijaju lasersko zračenje) i njihova okoliša (39). Prednost toga lasera u dezinfekciji korijenskog kanala jest duboko baktericidno djelovanje u dentinu čak do jednog milimetra dubine (40). Moritz i suradnici (41) istaknuli su da se u korijenskim kanalima broj bakterija (*Enterococcus faecalis* i *Escherichia coli*) smanjio za 99,16 posto nakon zračenja Nd:YAG-om. Gutknecht i njegovi kolege (42) postigli su smanjenje broja bakterija od čak 99,92 posto nakon zračenja tim uređajem (15 Hz i 100 mJ). Tijekom rada laserom Nd:YAG u korijenskom kanalu, tanki fiberoptički nastavak (promjer otprilike 200 µm) treba postaviti jedan do dva milimetra od apeksa i pomicati kružnim pokretima prema koronarnoj strani. Tako se postiže ravnomjerno zračenje cijele intrakanalne dentinske stijenke i sprječava pretjerano zagrijavanje apeksa (36).

S obzirom na to da se valna duljina lasera Nd:YAG dobro apsorbira u melaninu i pigmentiranom tkivu a slabo u vodi, baktericidni učinak je nešto slabiji na nepigmentiranim bakterijama kao što je *Enterococcus faecalis* (37) i na bakterijskom biofilmu bogatom vodom (38, 39). Predloženi parametri za laser Nd:YAG u dezinfekciji korijenskog kanala su: 15 Hz, 100 mJ, i 1,5 W, četiri puta po 5 do 10 sekundi s intervalom od 20 sekundi (43). U istraživanjima još nije dokazano da laser Nd:YAG antibakterijski bolje djeluje od NaOCl-a (38). Bergman i suradnici (44) zaključili su da Nd:YAG ne može zamijeniti standardne protokole za dezinfekciju korijenskog kanala NaOCl-om nego se treba primijeniti kao dodatna tehnika.

Zbog termičkog djelovanja laser Nd:YAG uzrokuje morfološke promjene na dentinskoj stijenki korijenskog kanala

sers, whose wavelengths are highly absorbed in water and hydroxyapatite, have a superficial effect on dentine walls and can be used for removal of the layer and disruption of intra-canal biofilms (32).

When using lasers inside the root canal, several limitations have to be taken into consideration. Firstly, the laser light is emitted in a straight line from the tip of an optical plain-ended fibre or a laser guide with a divergence angle of only 18 to 20 degrees (22). With such unidirectional laser beam, it is difficult to gain equal irradiation of the whole root canal dentine surface (22, 33). Moreover, the root canal preparation as well as retreatment procedures with laser and plain fibres is dangerous in curved root canals because of the risk of creating ledges and perforations (34, 35). To improve the surface area of the root canal dentine being irradiated, a helicoidal withdrawing motion from apical to coronal part is proposed when using fibre tips (36). Besides, new conical side-firing fibre tips with 80% lateral and 20% forward radiation provide complete coverage of intra-canal walls (37) (Figure 3, 4). Another limitation is the safe use of lasers in the root canal, especially thermal damage of periradicular tissues through the open apical foramen may occur when using the erbium lasers at ablative settings (38).

Nd:YAG

Nd:YAG laser (1064 nm) has been the most widely investigated laser for endodontic disinfection. Antimicrobial effect of the Nd:YAG is based on thermal heating of the bacterial environment and local heating inside bacteria (through chromophores inside bacteria sensitive to the laser light) (39). The advantage of the Nd:YAG laser in root canal disinfection is its significant bactericidal effect up to 1 mm into the dentine (40). Moritz et al. (41) found 99.16% reduction of bacterial numbers (*Enterococcus faecalis* and *Escherichia coli*) in inoculated root canals after Nd:YAG irradiation. Gutknecht et al. (42) achieved an average of 99.92% reduction in the number of intracanal *Enterococcus faecalis* using the Nd:YAG laser at 15 Hz and 100 mJ. In order to provide even irradiation of the dentine walls and to prevent thermal damage to the periradicular tissues, a thin glass fibre tip of the Nd:YAG laser (diameter of approximately 200 µm) has to be placed within 1-2 mm of the apex and moved in slow circular movements to the crown (36).

Since Nd:YAG laser irradiation is well absorbed in melanin and dark pigmented tissues and poorly in water, it is not as effective against nonpigmented bacteria (such as *Enterococcus faecalis*) (37) and bacterial biofilms (38, 39) and therefore higher energy densities are required to induce a lethal thermal effect. At present, safety parameters for the Nd:YAG laser are 15 Hz, 100 mJ, and 1.5 W, four times for 5 to 10 seconds, with an interval of 20 s (43). Antibacterial effect of Nd:YAG laser has never been shown to be superior to conventional NaOCl irrigation (38). Bergman et al. (44) concluded that Nd:YAG laser irradiation is not an alternative but a possible adjunct to existing protocols for root canal disinfection.

After Nd:YAG laser irradiation of intracanal dentine walls, morphological changes such as melting and recrystalli-

– otapanje i rekristalizaciju intertubularnog dentina s otvorenim i zatvorenim dentinskim tubulusima (45) (slika 5.). Ako zaostali sloj nije prije toga uklonjen, taj će uređaj potaknuti njegovu kontrakciju i isparavanje te karakteristični tzv. *glazing* izgled površine dentina (45, 46). Snažnije lasersko zračenje (veće od 3W) potpuno će ukloniti ostatke tkiva, uzrokovati strukturne promjene površine, karbonizaciju i pukotine kao posljedicu termičkog oštećenja (47).

Diodni laser

Diodni laser emitira zračenje vidljivog (većinom 660 nm) i infracrvenog (810, 980 nm) područja elektromagnetskog spektra. Zbog visokog koeficijenta apsorpcije u vodi (0,68 cm⁻¹) njegove valne duljine pliće prodiru u dentin (do 750 µm) od lasera Nd:YAG (48). U znanstvenoj literaturi samo je nekoliko radova o antimikrobnom djelovanju toga uređaja (49). Moritz i suradnici (50) pokazali su značajno antimikrobrovo djelovanje toga lasera (810 nm, 3 W) tijekom 5 x 5 sekundi na bakterije *Escherichia coli* i *Enterococcus faecalis* u korijenskim kanalima zuba. Kada se rabila snaga od 4 W, diodni laser bio je još učinkovitiji, ali je uzrokovao i porast temperature od 6°C. Gutknecht i suradnici (36) također su dokazali učinkovito uklanjanje bakterije *Enterococcus faecalis* iz korijenskog kanala nakon zračenja diodnim laserom (810 nm) snage 3 W. U istraživanju Bage i suradnika (20) otkriveno je antimikrobrovo djelovanje diodnog lasera (985 nm, 2 W, 3x20 s) na biofilm i bakteriju *Enterococcus faecalis* slično 2,5-postotnom NaOCl-u tijekom 60 sekundi.

Diodni laser uzrokuje slične morfološke promjene na dentinskem zidu korijenskog kanala kao i laser Nd:YAG (otapanje zaostalog sloja, zatvoreni i otvoreni dentinski tubuli) (50) (slika 6.).

Antimikrobnna fotodinamska terapija (aPDT)

Antimikrobnna fotodinamska terapija (aPDT) ili fotoaktivirana dezinfekcija (PAD) jest metoda laserski izazvane fotoķemiske dezinfekcije ili sterilizacije tvrdih i mekih tkiva koja se temelji na aktivaciji netoksičnog fotosenzitivnog sredstva malim energijama lasera. Energija lasera potiče fotosenzitivno sredstvo koje u prisutnosti molekula kisika stvara slobodne radikale koji oštećuju membranu bakterija i njihov DNK (51). Fotosenzitivno sredstvo veže se za površinu bakterija i prodire u njihovu stanicu, ne oštećujući humane stanice domaćina (52).

Učinkovitost aPDT-a ovisi o nekoliko čimbenika – o vrsti i koncentraciji fotosenzitivnog sredstva, vrsti bakterije, izvoru svjetlosti i parametrima zračenja (53). Danas se najčešće primjenjuju kombinacije diodnog lasera od 630 nm, 660 nm i 670 nm ili helij: te neonski laser s metilenskim ili toluidinskim modrilom.

Mnogobrojna istraživanja *in vitro* (38, 39) i *ex vivo* (20, 54) pokazala su značajno antimikrobrovo djelovanje aPDT-a u korijenskom kanalu. Fonesca i suradnici (55) istaknuli su značajno smanjenje broja bakterija *Enterococcus faecalis* (99,9%) nakon djelovanja toluidinskog modrila iodnog lasera od 50 mW. Jednako smanjenje broja bakterije *Enterococcus faecalis* postigli su u svojem radu Bago i suradnici (20) i to kominicijom fenotiazin klorida i diodnog lasera (660 nm) snage

zation with open or closed dentinal tubules can be observed (45) (Figure 5). If the smear layer has not been removed, Nd:YAG irradiation will cause contraction, evaporation and glazing effects on its surface (45, 46). At higher power settings (3W and above), total removal of tissue remnants, structural changes, carbonisation and cracks are found as a result of thermal damage (47).

Diode laser

Diode lasers emit radiation within the visible (mostly 660 nm) and infrared (810 to 980 nm) range of the electromagnetic spectrum. Due to the higher absorption coefficient in water (0.68 cm⁻¹), diode lasers have lower penetration depth into the dentine (up to 750 µm) compared to Nd:YAG laser (48). There are only few data about the antimicrobial effectiveness of diode lasers in root canal treatment available in the literature so far (49). Moritz et al. (50) showed the bactericidal effect of a diode laser (810 nm) at 3 W during 5 x 5 s against intracanal *Escherichia coli* and *Enterococcus faecalis* in extracted teeth. Irradiation at 4 W was even more effective although associated with a temperature rise of 6°C. The same result with a diode laser (810 nm) at 3 W during 30 s was reported by Gutknecht et al. (36) against intracanal *Enterococcus faecalis*. In a study by Bago et al. (20) the effect of a diode laser (985 nm, 2 W, 3x20 s) against *E. faecalis* biofilm was similar to the use of 2.5% NaOCl for 60 s.

Morphological changes in the dentine walls after diode laser irradiation are similar to those obtained with a Nd:YAG laser (disruption and melting of the smear layer, closed and opened dentinal tubules) (50) (Figure 6).

Antimicrobial photodynamic therapy (aPDT)

Antimicrobial photodynamic therapy (aPDT) or photoactivated disinfection (PAD) is a laser induced photochemical disinfection or sterilization of hard and soft tissues which is based on the activation of a nontoxic photosensitizer by low laser energy. As a result of the interaction between the photosensitizer and the laser light, singlet oxygen (1O_2) is formed out of molecular oxygen (3O_2) which causes damage to the bacterial membrane and to its DNA (51). The photosensitizers are selected to have a specific affinity to the bacterial membranes, without affecting the host cells viability (52).

The effectiveness of aPDT depends on several factors: the type of the photosensitizer or dye, its concentration, the type of bacteria, the light source and the irradiation parameters (53). Various combinations of light sources (diode laser at 630nm, 660nm and 670nm; Helium: Neon laser) and dyes (methylene blue, tolonium chloride) have been investigated and are commercially available.

Many *in vitro* (38, 39) and *ex vivo* (20, 54) studies have shown that aPDT has potential to improve root canal disinfection after classical instrumentation and rinsing. Fonesca et al. (55) reported a high bacterial reduction rate (99.9%) after treating intracanal *Enterococcus faecalis* with toluidine blue and 50 mW diode laser (660 nm). The same reduction rate

100 mW tijekom jedne minute. U istraživanju *in vivo* Garceza i suradnika (56), aPDT je učinkovito uklonio mikroorganizme rezistentne na antibiotike. U radu Nga i suradnika (14) bez bakterija je bilo 86,5 posto korijenskih kanala nakon endodontske terapije i dodatne dezinfekcije aPDT-om s metilenskim modrilom i diodnim laserom (665 nm, 1 W, 30J/cm²) tijekom dvije i pol minute. Rezultati drugih istraživanja *in vivo* pokazuju da se aPDT može preporučiti kao alternativa ili dodatak trenutačno dostupnim metodama dezinfekcije korijenskog kanala (52, 57).

Suprotno navedenom, Souza i suradnici (58) nisu pronašli značajno antimikrobno djelovanje aPDT-a s metilenskim ili toluidinskim modrilom i 660 nm diodnim laserom (40 mW) u kemijsko-mehaničkoj instrumentaciji. Meire i suradnici (38) istaknuli su u svojem istraživanju bolje antimikrobno djelovanje 2,5-postotnog NaOCl-a od PAD-a. Kontradiktorni rezultati istraživanja najvjerojatnije su dobiveni zbog različitih upotrijebljenih parametara lasera, različitih vrsta i volumena fotosenzitivnih sredstava te sustava prijenosa laserske energije (53). Nadalje, lošije antimikrobno djelovanje aPDT-a u nekim kanalima nastalo je zbog ograničene difuzije fotosenzitivnog sredstva u nepristupačne dijelove korijenskog kanala, dentinske tubuluse i biofilm te ograničenog stvaranja kisikovih radikala u uskim kanalima (58).

Laseri Er:YAG i Er,Cr:YSGG

Valne duljine erbij-lasera (Er:YAG, 2940 nm; Er,Cr:YSGG, 2790 nm) dobro se apsorbiraju u vodi i hidroksiapatitu, pa se upotrebljavaju za ablaciiju tvrdih i mekih zubnih tkiva. U endodonciji su ti laseri vrlo učinkoviti u uklanjanju zaostalog sloja (59, 60) (slika 7.) i bakterijskog biofilma (39). S obzirom na to da se njihova energija gotovo potpuno apsorbira u prvih 300 do 400 μm dentinskog tkiva, baktericidni učinak je površinski (32).

Posljednjih nekoliko godina istražuje se učinak tih uređaja u aktivaciji intrakanalnih sredstava za ispiranje. Laserski aktivirano ispiranje (LAI) temelji se na stvaranju kavitacija i zvučnih strujanja tekućine u kanalu kao posljedice fototermalnog i fotomehaničkog učinka lasera. Snažna apsorpcija valnih duljina i energije erbij-lasera (otprilike 50 – 75 mJ) u vodi i NaOCl-u uzrokuje isparavanje vode i stvaranje velikih eliptičnih mjehurića zraka. Oni mogu prouzročiti ekspanziju volumena sredstva za ispiranje za 1600 puta i posljedično veliki intrakanalni tlak koji izbacuje tekućinu iz kanala. Kada mjehurići zraka implodiraju, nakon 100 do 200 mikrosekundi razvija se podtlak i tekućina se vraća u kanal uzrokujući sekundarni kavitacijski učinak (61, 62). Istraživanja su pokazala značajno uklanjanje zaostalog sloja nakon LAI-a (63). De Moor i suradnici (64) te De Groot i njegovi kolege (61) istaknuli su bolje uklanjanje debrisa iz apikalnog dijela korijenskog kanala nakon LAI-a s Er,Cr:YSGG-om i Er:YAG-om (75 mJ, 20 Hz, 1,5 W, 4 x 5 s) te 2,5-postotnim NaOCl-om negoli u slučaju konvencionalnog ispiranja ili pasivnog ultrazvučnog ispiranja. Ako se laser Er:YAG rabi pri manjim energijama (20 mJ, 15 Hz) i vrlo kratkim pulzovima (50 μs), intrakanalne kavitacije i udarni valovi nastaju

was achieved by phenothiazine chloride or toluidine blue activated by a diode laser (660 nm, 100 mW) for 1 min in the study by Bago et al. (20). In an *in vivo* study of Garcez et al. (56), a combination of polyethylenimine chlorine and a diode laser (40 mW, 4 min, energy: 9.6 J), was used successfully for the eradication of multi-drug resistant microorganisms. Ng et al. (14) found 86.5% of root canals without bacteria after endodontic therapy followed by methylene blue mediated aPDT (665 nm, 1 W, 30J/cm²) for 2.5 min twice. The results of other *in vivo* studies recommended aPDT as an alternative, or a supplement an adjunct to currently used root canal disinfection methods (52, 57).

Souza et al. (58) did not find a significant additional effect of the aPDT compared to chemomechanical instrumentation with either methylene blue or toluidine blue and 660 nm diode laser (40 mW). Meire et al. (38) found a higher efficacy of 2.5% NaOCl compared to PAD. The contradictory results may be caused by the different light parameters and wavelengths; by the concentration, type and volume of the photosensitizers; light delivery techniques; interaction time of the dye with the medium and whether or not a mature biofilm was used (53). Furthermore, limited diffusion of the photosensitizer into intracanal irregularities, dentinal tubules and into the biofilm with restricted production of reactive oxygen species (ROS) will interfere with the efficacy of a PDT in root canal disinfection (58).

Er:YAG and Er,Cr:YSGG lasers

The wavelengths of the Erbium lasers (Er:YAG, 2940 nm; Er,Cr:YSGG, 2790 nm) are well absorbed in water and hydroxyapatite and are therefore mostly used for the ablation of dental hard and soft tissues. In endodontics, the Erbium lasers are very effective in the removal of the intra-canal smear layer (59, 60) (Figure 7) and have the potential to destroy biofilms on dentine walls (39). The energy of the Erbium lasers is almost completely absorbed in the first 300 to 400 μm of dentine tissue so that the bactericidal effect is superficial (32).

Over the last few years, there has been an increasing interest in the use of Erbium lasers for the agitation of intracanal water-based fluids. Laser activated irrigation (LAI) is based on the creation of specific cavitation phenomena and acoustic streaming in intracanal fluids as a result of photothermal and photomechanical effects. The strong absorption of the Erbium laser energy (at low settings of 50-75 mJ) in water and NaOCl causes vaporization and formation of large elliptical vapour bubbles. The vapour bubbles cause a volumetric expansion of up to 1,600 times the original volume of an irrigant with high intracanal pressure which drives the fluid out of the canal. The bubbles implode after 100 to 200 microseconds, creating pressure which sucks fluid back into the canal: inducing secondary cavitation effect (61, 62). This technique was demonstrated to be effective in the removal of intracanal dentine debris and smear layer (63). De Moor et al. (64) and De Groot et al. (61) showed a higher efficiency of LAI with Er,Cr:YSGG and Er:YAG (75 mJ, 20 Hz, 1.5 W, 4 x 5 s) and 2.5% NaOCl in the removal of dentine debris from the apical part of the root canal compared to con-

kao rezultat fotoakustičnog i fotomehaničkog učinka, a postupak se naziva fotonsko inicirajuće fotoakustično strujanje (PIPS). U usporedbi s LAI-om, kod kojega se intrakanalni konični nastavak postavlja pet milimetara od apeksa, tijekom PIPS-a se konični 600 µm debeli nastavak (engl. *side-firing stripped*) postavlja na ulaz u korijenski kanal uz kontinuirano ispiranje (65).

Zaključak

Lasersko zračenje baktericidno djeluje te uklanja zaostali sloj i debris iz korijenskog kanala. No još uvijek nema jasnih dokaza o superiornosti antimikrobnog djelovanja laserskog zračenja u odnosu prema tradicionalnim tehnikama dezinfekcije NaOCl-om. Erbij-laserom i Nd:YAG-om mogu se čistiti korijenski kanali – erbij-laserom postiže se aktivirano ispiranje i fotonsko inicirajuće fotoakustično strujanje, a Nd:YAG-om dezinfekcija dentinskih tubulusa. Laseri se preporučaju kao dodatna dezinfekcija i za čišćenje korijenskog kanala nakon kemijsko-mehaničke obrade. Potrebna su dodatna randomizirana klinička istraživanja o učinku lasera na dugoročni ishod endodontskog liječenja zuba.

Abstract

The outcome of root canal treatment is based on efficient disinfection of the root canal system and prevention of reinfection. Current chemomechanical cleaning methods do not always achieve these goals, and insufficient root canal disinfection is the main reason for endodontic failure. Due to high energy content and specific characteristics of laser light, laser treatment has been proposed for cleaning and disinfecting the root canal system. This paper reviews the literature covering the effect of Er:YAG, Er,Cr:YSGG, Nd:YAG and diode laser on the root canal wall in the removal of smear layer and against intracanal bacteria. Recently, the use of laser energy to induce cavitation and acoustic streaming of intracanal irrigants has been investigated. Based on recent literature, it can be concluded that lasers have bactericidal effects. However, they still cannot replace sodium hypochlorite and should be considered as an adjunct to the current chemical root canal disinfection protocols. Certain lasers can help in removing the smear layer and debris and can modify the morphology of the root canal wall. Unfortunately, there have not been enough randomized clinical studies evaluating endodontic treatment outcome following the use of laser.

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