Review

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Low-level Laser Therapy: A Review of Its Applications in the Management of Oral Mucosal Disorders

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Abstract

Due to its analgesic, anti-inflammatory, and biostimulating effects, low-level laser therapy (LLLT) has been widely used for oral disorders, such as oral lichen planus (OLP), xerostomia, recurrent aphthous stomatitis (RAS), herpes labialis, burning mouth syndrome (BMS), and oral mucositis (OM). The research team for the present study has reviewed the literature on the subject, with an emphasis on the applicability of LLLT in general and of its various clinical protocols for the management of those oral disorders. In lesions such as the ones occurring in OM, RAS, herpes labialis, and OLP, the course of wound healing and the pain have been shown to decrease, with a few, or most often, no adverse side effects. The literature shows that LLLT can also be effective in reducing symptoms in patients with BMS. For the treatment of hyposalivation and xerostomia, the use of LLLT has been described in the literature, but no consensus has resulted. Very few controlled clinical studies with well-established therapeutic protocols have occurred, except for OM, for which LLLT has been widely researched. Although information on the use of the laser for some lesions has already been consolidated, further research is needed, especially randomized, controlled clinical trials with long-term follow-up. Those studies will allow the safe use of LLLT, permitting the creation of care protocols for the management of oral disorders.