

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/modern-aesthetics-focus-on-energy-based-devices/dr-rox-anderson-forecasts-multiple-revolutions-in-lasers/56856/>

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Dr. Rox Anderson Shares His Worst Complications

Jill Waibel:

Hello everyone. We have the world's most knowledgeable and influential laser leader here, and we're excited for his perspective and looking forward to insights that Dr. Rox Anderson will bring to us today. So what is your biggest complication in laser surgery or a complication and what did that teach you? Because again, we're trying to inspire the next generation of laser in humans.

Rox Anderson:

Sure. Yeah, I could add to that question. I've seen plenty of complications by my own hands. And the first thing you realize is how important it is to be really careful. I'll give you my worst. I was running the first human study with a drug, a light activated drug, which is now available for eye disease and other things called Visudyne. But we were doing a cancer trial with that. I was admitting patients to the hospital and giving them this IV drug and then activating it with light to treat their cancers. And there was a man who came into that trial, had had a history of alcoholism and had marginal liver function. And this drug we knew had some liver toxicity at the time. He died. He died a month after we gave him this drug, and I never forgot that. I felt horrible about it. So that taught me just at a soulful level, look, you're working with other people's lives. And what I walked away from that with is just the absolute obligation to respect. I like to do, like in the cosmetic stuff where I don't have cancer, so I can't test that drug on myself, but all these lasers and stuff, I have Rox's golden rule, which is do unto yourself before you do unto others. If you're not willing to take a risk, then don't pass that on. And it was just an accident. It was unpredictable, but there it was. I think another complication more in the laser treatment stuff was we invented Q-switch laser for tattoo removal. And you think, oh, well, tattoo removal, that's great. You can remove tattoos without causing scars. But we didn't know at the beginning that there are some tattooings that will change color permanently.

I had a woman who worked as an airline stewardess and she had a lip liner tattoo. She showed up to be treated. I treated her with a Q-switch ruby laser back in the day and it turned black, but you can't see that it's turning black. The immediate response is whitening. So it looked like everything was going well. And I was appalled by this. She looked much worse after my treatment to try to make her look better. And we tried multiple times to get rid of it. It didn't work out, and she ended up having her lip excised. So she had surgery now as a result of a laser complication. I published that case, and that was the first description of laser-induced tattoo darkening. Now it's kind of like a routine thing, but you know what that taught me was the value of paying attention to the endpoints. With that case, I became an endpointologist. I think that the best way to know what's going on inside the skin is to really pay attention to the immediate responses and understand them at a level of detail. So we've published a couple of papers just called Endpoints, and there's another one coming out in the JAAD.