

Laser treatment for post-menopausal women, cancer survivors

By **Jenny Deam** | November 10, 2015 | Updated: November 20, 2015

A new medical device with a decidedly feminine name, the MonaLisa Touch, has found a home in the male-dominated field of urology.

The carbon dioxide laser developed in Italy is being used to help post-menopausal women and breast cancer patients by removing thinning tissue from the vaginal wall to help promote healthy regrowth. It is the same laser treatment used by dermatologists for facial resurfacing, said Dr. Christina Pramudji, a Houston urologist who is one of the first in the city using the MonaLisa Touch as part of a treatment plan.

Pramudji knows a thing or two about breaking through to new protocols.



Photo: Courtesy

Dr. Christina Pramudji, a Houston urologist who opened a rare practice that caters exclusively to

Her practice, Houston Female Urology, is thought to be one of only two in the nation catering exclusively to women. It is the first and only such practice in Texas. _____

"Most think of urology as a male domain treating prostate problems or erectile (ones), but there are a lot of women who have trouble with their bladders or kidney stones," she said.

"They would be sitting in a waiting room full of men, and a lot of urologists aren't as focused on women's needs."

That got her to think: "It would be nice to have a place that's just for women."

She opened her specialty practice about a year ago as a solo practitioner.

She sees the laser treatment, which received Food and Drug Administration approval in 2014, as a breakthrough for women. While use of the laser for facial resurfacing can be painful, its application on the vaginal wall is virtually painless, without side effects and can be done in an office without anesthesia, she said.

Patients undergo three treatments about six weeks apart. The treatments last about five minutes. The laser delivers fractional carbon dioxide laser energy to vaginal wall tissue which promotes the creation of cells to make more collagen. When women pass menopause, their gynecological health changes as estrogen levels decline. Women who undergo breast cancer treatment experience similar declines, which can lead to dryness and discomfort from thinning tissue.

Pramudji began using the treatment about a month ago on about a dozen or so patients with good results. She calls it "a game-changing procedure for my post-menopausal patients."

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Reporter

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