

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF LASER SURGERY

Incorporated

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Dear Laser Medical Practitioner,

Many medical practitioners already use lasers in a variety of specialties; while others have entered the fields of cosmetic and/or dermatologic laser surgery from other specialties, in order to serve a rapidly growing market and enjoy the benefits of direct payment along with a steady stream of referrals from satisfied patients.

The transition to laser cosmetics / dermatology, and the use of lasers in other specialties, has been successful for many physicians who are well-qualified and experienced in the use of lasers. But for others, it has led to unforeseen results and sometimes costly lawsuits. As a class of surgical instruments, lasers, intense pulsed light and radio frequency devices may seem deceptively simple to surgeons skilled in the use of sharp instruments, and cosmetic physicians performing electrosurgical facelifts, endoscopic brow lifts, chemical peels, and dermabrasion for skin resurfacing, and also to practitioners in other surgical specialties using traditional non-laser techniques. The reality however is that these instruments are dangerous, sophisticated devices that can cut, ablate, coagulate, and weld living tissue by one or more complex biophysical processes. They can also cause severe burns, scars, delayed changes in skin pigment and texture and other injuries, as some newcomers to laser surgery have unfortunately learned.

The Benefits of Our Certification

Laser surgery is typically not taught in medical schools, or in most residency programs. It is often learned in postgraduate education, some of which is offered by laser manufacturers themselves. Scalpel-skilled physicians, who have an inadequate understanding of laser biophysics and safety, may not be fully qualified to use lasers in surgery.

The American Board of Laser Surgery (ABLS) has been keenly aware of this for over two decades. In recent years, many applicants for certification have come from cosmetic surgery and dermatology, joining others from diverse specialties including osteopathy, otolaryngology, gynecology, and internal medicine among others. Many who have passed our rigorous examinations have found the Board's Certificate to be a valuable credential in attracting patients. Our certification provides a solid foundation in basic laser science and safety that is beneficial to practitioners who use, or plan to use, any portion of the electromagnetic spectrum in medicine: lasers, pulsed light and radio frequency. An increased understanding of the biophysical processes involved can increase both efficacy and safety for patients.

The ABLS was created in 1984 by nineteen physicians and medical practitioners from diverse specialties who were the first to formally recognize the need to provide a unique certification in the use of lasers in medicine. They were truly pioneers in this evolving field. We are pleased that organizations including the ASLMS and others recognize the importance of such a foundation in laser biophysics and safety, and have initiated new CME courses. The good news for our candidates is that earning the ABLS Board Certification expands on knowledge gained through CME and is not dependent on attending a fixed conference or in-person seminar. It may be completed at anytime to fit a candidate's busy schedule.

The ABLS currently is the only medical specialty board that offers certification based on a rigorous process of assimilation of a proprietary Study Guide, passing our Written Examinations, and successfully completing the Oral Specialty Examination given by highly qualified Diplomates of the Board. The Board has certified nearly 500 physicians from all over the world, including Canada, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Australia, as well as the United States. These doctors have found that studying for and taking our examinations to be a valuable learning experience. At the present time, dozens more are in the process of earning our certificate.

Further, our mission, academic instruction and testing have been broadened to continuously include newer wavelengths and modalities as they come into use. Our certification has provided physicians worldwide with a deeper understanding of laser biophysics, including the dynamics and complexities of tissue interaction that is so critical to a successful practice.

The Application and Certification Process

Candidates prepare for the Written Basic Science and Safety Examinations using the Board's proprietary and in-depth printed Study Guide. The written examinations are prepared for and taken remotely to suit the candidate's schedule, either using a printed test that is mailed or by completing a convenient online answer form. The Oral Specialty Examination for candidates located in Asia is administered by one of the Board's well qualified senior Diplomates in Korea, under the auspices of Dr. Jin Wang Kim, our Director of Education and Membership in Asia. This examination reviews the candidate's continuing medical education and clinical experience in his / her specialty. The Oral Examination can be offered either in person or conducted remotely using the Board's convenient web conferencing service.

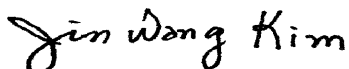
The ABLS has a very convenient online application at www.americanboardoflasersurgery.org. Any applicants may simply go to our Contact and Application page, download the Application Form, complete it, and email it to Dr. Kim at khg000@unitel.co.kr with a copy to the Board at lasers1060@aol.com. Please note that the certification process and fee structure for candidates residing in Asia are managed by Dr. Kim, and he should be contacted by email for additional information.

We do hope you will consider becoming certified.

Sincerely,



Edward M. Zimmerman, M.D.
President



Jin Wang Kim, M.D., Ph.D.
Director of Education and Membership, Asia