

BTL Vanquish ME Delivers Maximum Fat Reduction



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Further refining BTL Aesthetics' (Framingham, Mass.) patented non-invasive Vanquish technology, the new BTL Vanquish ME (Maximum Energy) delivers increased tunability for more homogenous heating, creating higher overall temperature elevation, with more precise focus and less scatter to non-fatty tissue than previously available. Pairing these advances with three-dimensional (3D) imaging technologies provides 360° practice advantages – from marketing to patient counseling, satisfaction and retention.

In June 2015, BTL Vanquish ME became the only operator independent, non-contact radiofrequency (RF) system to earn U.S. Food and Drug Administration clearance for non-surgical circumferential reduction of the abdomen. As the landscape of body contouring options grows increasingly crowded, very few technologies possess the level of scientific support that BTL Vanquish ME does.

A recent case report showed that one treatment with the original Vanquish increased the apoptotic index – a measure of cell death that includes the number of apoptotic cell nuclei – in treated adipocytes by an average of 487%.¹ In published and pending peer-reviewed clinical studies, patients have achieved average abdominal reductions of 4.22 cm to nearly 5 cm, and 2.43 cm in one study involving the thighs.²⁻⁴ Notably, no serious treatment-related side effects occurred in any of these studies.

As the clinical evidence behind Vanquish proliferates, so too does Americans' dissatisfaction with their bodies. A recent survey found that two-thirds of women, and more than half of men, worry about their appearance weekly, with the abdomen topping the list of concerns for both genders.⁵ Another study showed that on a 10-point scale, American women rated their bodies overall at 6.09, versus 7.44 from women internationally.⁶

To address troublesome fat deposits, BTL Vanquish ME delivers what Chris Bailey, director of Ovation Medspa in Houston, Texas, calls "commercially acceptable results." The history of body sculpting includes devices that, technically speaking, could meet specific study endpoints, he explained, but in the clinic, results were not adequate enough to please the average patient. With BTL Vanquish ME, "We can produce a good enough result that people are happy to have spent their money on the treatment."

Gregory P. Mueller, M.D., a board certified plastic surgeon in Beverly Hills, Calif., begins the process with a thorough evaluation, assessing the patient's fat deposits and discussing surgical and non-surgical options. "Most patients are appropriate candidates for non-surgical treatment with BTL Vanquish ME. As with any procedure, patient selection is critical to success."

According to Mr. Bailey, anyone seeking to reduce the size of their abdomen and thighs is a good BTL Vanquish ME candidate. "The exceptions would be severely obese patients or those with a large degree of skin laxity."

"We want a patient who eats a healthy diet and has a stable weight," Dr. Mueller added. Along with those who want to refine results of prior liposuction, those who've never had a procedure before, who're in fairly good shape, but concerned about focal fat deposits in areas such as the waistline, mid-thighs, hips or medial knees, make good candidates.

All of Dr. Mueller's and Mr. Bailey's patients undergo 3D scans of their potential treatment areas, then, "We sit down and look at the images together," Dr. Mueller noted. "It's like a presentation – I point out the areas of fat deposition to make sure we're on the same page." He also discusses concepts such as skin laxity and amounts of fat in treatment areas, as well as potential contraindications to RF therapy including prior surgeries and metal implants.

Dr. Mueller also discusses how the treatment will feel. "Patients will feel warm in the application area. Certain individuals may feel intense heat or 'hotspots' in areas. We reassure



Before Tx



After four BTL Vanquish ME treatments

Photos courtesy of Chris Bailey

“The effectiveness of the treatment speaks for itself.”

patients that they're not going to get burned, but if they are feeling very warm, they should let the nurse know, so we can make sure the cooling fan is oriented appropriately.

As Mr. Bailey emphasized, “BTL Vanquish ME requires no anesthesia. For patients it's a little warmer than a heating pad, but it should not be uncomfortable.”

On a scale of 1 to 10, Dr. Mueller said most of his patients rate the discomfort as a one. “They describe feeling the warmth as pleasant.” During the session, some patients watch the in-room TVs; others nap.

For the procedure itself, Mr. Bailey said that after placing the client comfortably on the treatment table, “We position the BTL Vanquish ME panels over the target area, about 1 cm above the skin. Then we dial up the power and ensure we're obtaining good ‘tuning’ or absorption of the energy into the area. During the procedure, we continually monitor our energy levels (for safety and efficacy), and the client for comfort.”

BTL Vanquish ME causes no post-procedure discomfort and requires no recovery time. “Patients can put their clothes on and go right back to work,” Mr. Bailey reported.



myBodee 3D Scan shows 3.11 inch loss from waist after four BTL Vanquish ME treatments

Image courtesy of Chris Bailey

After treatment the area feels warm for about an hour, Dr. Mueller indicated. His staff instructs patients to gently massage the warm areas by hand. “Occasionally there is some redness, from the heat.” While it is extremely rare, some patients may feel tenderness in treated areas for a day or two, which responds to over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications.

Regarding BTL Vanquish ME results, in Mr. Bailey's experience, the manufacturer-recommended course of four treatments provides average circumference reductions of 2 to 3 inches, although some patients lose as much as 5 inches.

In Dr. Mueller's practice, “we don't have to measure waistlines. The effectiveness of the treatment speaks for itself.” He gauges the success of Vanquish largely through the patient satisfaction. “When patients see results on the front of their tummy, they sign up for another series for their love handles. They're also referring friends.”

Along with tightening skin, BTL Vanquish ME strengthens patient loyalty and retention. As Dr. Mueller shared, once surgical patients learn about BTL Vanquish ME, they often choose this treatment during the interval between their initial consultation and

surgery date. "As they're waiting to have their face-lift or other surgical procedure, many opt for Vanquish to improve the rest of their body."

Among new patients in particular, "BTL Vanquish ME is a huge differentiator. It sets us apart as being on the leading edge," said Mr. Bailey. "Think about it – does anyone want a five-year-old cell phone? Well, they want outdated aesthetic technology even less."

It is important to note that accurate measurements of the patients' bodies before and after treatment is an important aspect of managing their expectations and satisfaction. This is virtually impossible with a tape measure so Mr. Bailey uses the myBodee 3D imaging system by Styku (Los Angeles, Calif.), which he offers at no charge. With myBodee, "You put the patient on a turntable that spins them 360° in front of a scanner to automatically measure 100 different points on the body," he expressed. "Once a person is scanned, the computer calculates all the measurements. There's no human intervention involved."

Similarly, Dr. Mueller has created the IC360 system, where patients stand still while a nurse circles them with a camera. The cost for this service is accounted for in the initial consult fee.

Having precise before and after measurements boosts patient satisfaction. In one of Dr. Mueller's cases, six weeks after undergoing BTL Vanquish ME treatment for her medial knees and thighs the patient said that she could feel, but not see, tighter skin. "We don't even expect to see outcomes until ten weeks," Dr. Mueller stated. "However, her six-week results, rotating in three dimensions before her eyes, elicited a wow. It takes a lot of work out of my court to have the images speak for themselves. You can see muscle definition, bulges that are going away, skin texture and tone that are improving, fewer fine wrinkles, and less skin laxity. BTL Vanquish ME is a tremendous tool that has surpassed my expectations."

Mr. Bailey also feels 3D imaging helps yield additional zones of treatment. "Someone might come in thinking, 'I need to treat the front of my stomach', but once they can see their body all the way around, they may consider treating their love handles and inner thighs too. It shows them much more clearly where their problem areas are."

In regards to patient expectations, "Imaging helps with setting realistic ideas of what's possible," said Mr. Bailey. "It's challenging when someone wants a surgical outcome, but they don't want surgery. Thus, setting realistic expectations requires showing prospective patients many before-and-after pictures, in 2D and 3D; and not just the good results, but also average and poor results, so they can see a broad range of outcomes on different body types."

As a plastic surgeon, BTL Vanquish ME represents Dr. Mueller's first non-invasive device purchase. "It's been tremendous," he advised. "Patients' threshold for choosing a non-surgical intervention that requires no downtime is very low because, "It is a procedure they can just weave into their lifestyle. They don't have to take time off from work, or worry about being bruised or showing telltale signs that they've had work done. Nevertheless, patients aren't ashamed to say they've had Vanquish treatment because it is not 'surgery.'"

While it is too soon to say whether BTL Vanquish ME would lead some patients to undergo liposuction, Dr. Mueller has used the device to treat several patients who previously had liposuction or abdominoplasty at his practice or elsewhere. "As a surgeon, I've been practicing for 17 years, and it's very hard to make someone perfectly symmetrical. BTL Vanquish ME has given me a bridge procedure to touch up my own and other surgeons' results."

Financially, "It has been amazing. After only three months, BTL Vanquish ME was generating \$15,000 in new revenue monthly," Dr. Mueller reported. This includes ramped-up revenues for skincare firming cream, which he bundles with packages of four to six treatments, giving discounts for up-front payment. "It's been great for our cash flow." Patients require his evaluation only at the first visit, "Then the nurses carry out the treatment sessions. Safety is important and I don't have to worry about it when I'm not here."



50 year old male ten years post liposuction presenting with asymmetry, residual fat deposition and loss of skin turgor before Tx



50 year old male ten weeks after six BTL Vanquish ME treatments
Photos courtesy of Gregory P. Mueller, M.D.



58 year old male post abdominoplasty requesting improved symmetry and reduction of fat deposits before Tx



58 year old male ten weeks after six BTL Vanquish ME treatments
Photos courtesy of Gregory P. Mueller, M.D.

*Photos represent still images extracted from 360° imaging video via Dr. Mueller's IC360 System. To see full 360° rotational videos please visit: www.btl aesthetics.com/360-1 or www.btl aesthetics.com/360-2

“With BTL Vanquish ME, the patient lies under the device that transmits the RF, so it gets dispersed evenly in and around fat molecules. It is very smart technology because the RF is strongly attracted to fat cells.”

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Compared to other RF body sculpting devices, BTL Vanquish ME evenly treats the entire abdomen and flanks simultaneously, Mr. Bailey noted. “With a contact RF device that requires a technician to manipulate a handpiece over the treatment area, it is impossible to heat that large of an area simultaneously and evenly for an extended period of time. This can lead to uneven results and a greater likelihood of discomfort or burns,” he expressed. “With handheld devices the outcome is very dependent on the operator’s technique, whereas with Vanquish, once it’s set up properly, there’s no technique involved – the device does the work.”

As well, according to Dr. Mueller, with cryolipolysis, “You must make sure your technician puts that suction cup on in the right area – otherwise you may have abnormal ridging post treatment. Conversely, with BTL Vanquish ME, the patient lies under the device that transmits the RF, so it gets dispersed evenly in and around fat molecules. It is very smart technology because the RF is strongly attracted to fat cells,” so much so that patients with asymmetrical fat deposits find that BTL Vanquish ME evens them out. “Patients who have more fat on one side frequently tell us it feels warmer on that side,” he added.



myBodee 3D Scan shows 4.65 inch loss from waist after four BTL Vanquish ME treatments

Image courtesy of Chris Bailey

One reason Dr. Mueller chose BTL Vanquish ME is that he was unimpressed with the contour irregularities left by other technologies, including cryolipolysis. As well, “Cryolipolysis does not provide skin tightening. I wanted a technology that would not only reduce fat permanently, but also help with skin elasticity. RF is a proven technology to tighten skin. Many technologies out there do that, but RF is one of the most effective. I liked that a lot.”

Both Mr. Bailey and Dr. Mueller also like the fact that BTL Vanquish ME procedure is time-efficient and requires no consumables. The current manufacturer-recommended protocol for cryolipolysis suggests treating each area twice (one month apart), thus treatment of the abdomen and flanks could take up to eight hours, said Mr. Bailey. Treating a similar area with BTL Vanquish ME typically takes four, 45-minute sessions, performed one week apart.

While patients are being treated, “We have their attention for 45 minutes,” Dr. Mueller pointed out. “Often we’ll play looping videos that show our results, and other offerings we provide.”

“Any time you make a client happy with one technology, they will return for more of what you have to offer,” Mr. Bailey stated.

“The BTL Vanquish ME is indicated for temporary reduction in circumference of the abdomen. The BTL Vanquish Flex applicator is intended for use in applying therapeutic deep heat in body tissues for the treatment of selected medical conditions such as increasing blood flow to tissues in the treatment area.”