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Forces/Gear



Video



Latest Action



Ch.5 EYEWITNESS NEWS @ 11 replays on UPN 44 Cable 12 at Midnight.

San Francisco Time: 03:01 PM

No Pain Dentistry

Juliette Goodrich Reporting

If you dread going to the dentist, the sound of a drill is enough to make you cringe. This drill, however, could change your mind.

It's the sound of a new cutting edge device that literally drills cavities with water, not to mention without pain.

Dr. Paul Menges is one of about half a dozen Bay Area dentists now using the new "WaterLase" drill. It combines a laser with a steady mist of water. The popping sound is the liquid being vaporized on the tooth's surface, creating an abrasive cutting action, without the "side-effects" of a traditional drill.

The effect for patients: little or no pain. In most common procedures, no anesthesia is necessary.

The other major advantage, according to the manufacturer, is accuracy. Since the water laser cuts a narrower path, it preserves more of the tooth and is less likely to inflame a nerve.

But the machine itself doesn't come cheap, around 45,000 dollars, and it can't be used with older Gold or Mercury type fillings. Still, dentists who are using the water laser say they can recoup some of that expense in time savings alone. That's because by-passing the need for anesthesia can shave 20 minutes off a typical appointment.

Convenient for patients too, but ultimately, it's the promise of pain free drilling that's likely to leave most of them smiling.

- to make an appointment at Dr. Menges' Hayward office, call: 510-732-2610
- To learn more about the Waterlase Laser, visit their website at: www.biolase.com

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