



The present and the future of aesthetics in Japan  
Story behind the interest in Korean RF devices



Author/Hara Kaya (Director at Yaes Plastic Surgery/Dermatology Clinic)

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Director Hara Kaya is a specialist at a plastic surgery in Tokyo. She lectures at academic conferences and symposiums, and started researching non-invasive procedures after discovering a huge potential while learning laser procedures at Tokyo Women's Medical School. Dr. Hara writes about the latest trends in aesthetics in Japan as a trusted source with a passion for aesthetics in general while pursuing research.

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The cold winter has passed, and the warm sunlight is shining on us.

As I am writing this, it's getting increasingly warmer in Tokyo, and even wearing a light shirt can make you sweat. I feel hopeful for tomorrow under the bright sunlight. Although many unstable factors remain, such as COVID-19 and the Russia–Ukraine conflict, I hope that everything will work itself out in the end.

### Device introduction comes with many concerns

My latest interest is to buy a new device for my clinic. I assume many clinic owners periodically have similar concerns. For small clinics, purchasing a medical device is an important matter that can affect the management of the clinic, and careful review is required in every aspect. For example, I must consider combinations of the procedures with devices that I currently own, needs of patients, severity of pain, recovery periods, size of devices, purchasing costs, maintenance costs, procedure times, procedure costs, effects of one procedure, availability in nearby clinics, use in large general hospitals, possibilities of differentiation according to procedure methods, responses in case of malfunction, and frequency of malfunctioning.

If devices are properly operated during procedures, the initial and maintenance costs may not be a large concern. However, if the price decreases due to price competition, small clinics cannot compete against large franchises or hospitals with huge capital. Therefore, we must consider whether a clear differentiating point exists other than the price itself. Furthermore, as my clinic does not advertise, my clients include only existing patients. Ignoring their needs leads to a marked drop in device usability.

### Decreasing popularity of HIFU due to pain

Patients who visit my clinic do not like procedures that involve pain. Even if less effective, they prefer to have small procedures that are not painful. Patients are often

even reluctant to try HIFU, the most common of all procedures for lifting the skin. For IPL and long-pulsed lasers, patients regularly come for procedures without special explanations or consultations. However, in comparison, usability is rather low. As I explain in great detail, I think the patients who visit my clinic are aware of procedures for sagging skin. However, they care more about lowering the pain experienced than increasing the effect.

Considering this situation, I am looking for a device with a low degree of pain. While THERMAGE lifts sagging skin, and I am fully aware of the effectiveness, the cost of introduction or the time limit for the tip created barriers. I was looking for a device that is effective but relatively economical without excessive maintenance cost. Such a device was difficult to find since lifting/tightening devices do not show effects immediately after the procedure, and determination of effectiveness is tricky. In the meantime, several Korean manufacturers recently released new RF devices, and I am currently testing some of them.

**Korean RF devices may expand in market share**

One of the most interesting devices among those demonstrated was an RF device called VOLNEWMER by Classys. Not yet formally released in the Korean market, I heard it was initially released in the Japanese market. It may be sold under a different name when sales start in Korea.

I was impressed with the design of the rounded tip and the head part of the handpiece, as it was designed to move in close contact with the skin's surface. The rounded curved tip allows uniform irradiation, reduces pain, and significantly reduces the stress on the part of the administrator. No time limit exists for the procedure, and the overall cost is low since it uses water cooling rather than gas cooling. The procedure's effect is also great. I would like to introduce a case by director Koromohara Kumiko, one of the doctors that introduced effect is clearly VOLNEWMER in Japan and who uses the device in the clinic. She gladly provided the



**Fig. 1.** Before procedure (left), 1 month after VOLNEWMER procedure (right). 4cm2/200 shots/level 4.5~3.5 on the left cheek, 3cm2/200 shots/level 4.5~3.5 on the right cheek, and 3cm2/200 shots/level 2.0 on the neck were administered. Changes were seen in the cheeks and procedure was performed on neck lines. Provided by Koromohara Kumiko.



**Fig. 2.** 3D picture before and after VOLNEWMER procedure. When the movement of the skin is indicated in arrows, it can be seen that the skin has moved towards the center of the cheeks. Provided by Koromohara Kumiko.

procedure photographs which became the reason for my interest in the device.

The effect is clearly seen thanks to the 3D camera (<Fig. 1, 2>). When I used the VOLNEWMER with the same output as that in <Fig. 1>, the level of pain was within the allowable range. The devices at my clinic do not involve severe pain based on the gate control theory. However, if VOLNEWMER can show marked results, I felt as though I must try it. Many RF devices are sold by a variety of manufacturers. However, few devices have clear tightening effects by heating the fiber tissues

through impedance rather than simple heating. The monopolar RF device market was long monopolized by THERMAGE, but Korean devices may soon take up the market share in Japanese monopolar RF treatment, as they did for the current HIFU market. I hope that more people can take advantage of the new lifting/tightening procedures available with the benefits of this technology.

Translation/Soo Bin Yim (Continued on the next volume)



Fig. 3. VOLNEWMER.  
Provided by Classys Japan.

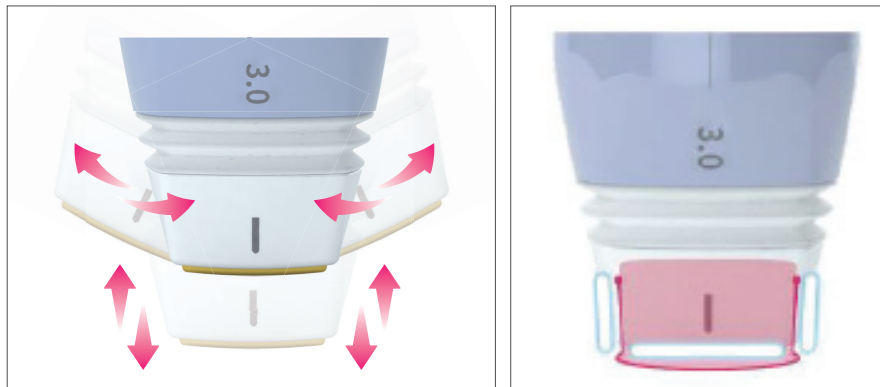


Fig. 4. VOLNEWMER handpiece. Effective procedure is possible as the head tilts along the skin's surface for close contact (left). Also, skin is continuously cooled using the contact cooling water system (right). Provided by Classys Japan.