CLASSYS

FORTRA

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"A Multilayer Lifting and Tightening Strategy with Volink 4D"

In recent aesthetic practice, treatment strategies are increasingly moving beyond the use of a single device toward combination approaches that integrate different mechanisms of action to achieve more satisfying clinical outcomes. In particular, the concept of "Tri-modal Lifting," which combines HIFU, monopolar RF, and Multi-wavelength Diode Laser, offers a multilayered approach to facial aging.
Dr. Eun Hyuk Lee of Classone Clinic has developed an integrated treatment strategy known as "Volink 4D," combining SHURINK UNIVERSE, VOLNEWMER, and FORTRA to address a broad spectrum of concerns, ranging from structural lifting and tightening to optical improvement of the skin. Based on Dr. Lee's clinical experience, this article explores the role of each device, their potential synergistic effects, and key considerations in clinical application, providing insight into a next-generation strategy for facial lifting and tightening.



Dr. Eun Hyuk Lee emphasized, "Volink 4D is an energy layering strategy that combines SHURINK UNIVERSE, VOLNEWMER, and FORTRA to sequentially address multiple tissue levels, from the SMAS and dermis to the optical properties of the skin."

How did you first encounter CLASSYS devices, and what were your impressions?

When consumers choose a brand, they consider various factors, including brand awareness, market share, and product quality. I believe CLASSYS is one of the most widely recognized brands not only in Korea but also across Asia. The company also offers an extensive portfolio, including HIFU, monopolar RF, four-wavelength laser systems, REEPOT, and QUADESSY, among many others. These devices are also widely recognized by patients visiting aesthetic clinics, and I believe one of the greatest advantages of CLASSYS is its ability to deliver a broad spectrum of treatment outcomes through a single brand.
Over the past two years, CLASSYS has introduced a number of new devices. Each time I have used a new device for the first time during a demonstration, I have been impressed not only by the treatment outcomes but also by the significant improvements in user convenience, device design, and overall attention to detail. Our clinic has used CLASSYS devices since their earlier generations and has continued to discuss potential issues and areas for improvement with the company. I have been particularly impressed by how actively CLASSYS incorporates feedback and challenges encountered in clinical practice and translates them into rapid device improvements.

What did you consider to be the key differentiating features of SHURINK UNIVERSE, VOLNEWMER, and FORTRA?

When introducing a new device into clinical practice, the most important consideration is treatment efficacy. The second is the potential risk profile, particularly safety. Brand recognition, cost, and other practical factors are also considered collectively when selecting a device. In my view, SHURINK UNIVERSE, VOLNEWMER, and FORTRA all meet these key criteria. Their differentiating features are best described individually. SHURINK UNIVERSE offers a wide variety of cartridges and allows practitioners to switch between MP and Normal modes according to treatment needs, enabling treatment protocols to be tailored to individual patients. In addition, the recently introduced 6 mm and 9 mm cartridges use larger transducers to create larger thermal coagulation zones, and we actively use them for body contouring.
VOLNEWMER is distinguished by its continuous water-cooling system, which helps substantially reduce patient discomfort. Pain is one of the major concerns patients have regarding RF procedures. In addition, improvements in the structural design of the monopolar RF tip help reduce the risk of burns, which I consider a particularly important advantage for clinicians in real-world practice.
FORTRA uses four wavelengths—755 nm, 808 nm, 940 nm, and 1064 nm—to deliver energy evenly across multiple skin layers. In particular, the addition of the 940 nm wavelength has helped reduce discomfort and improve treatment safety in patients with darker skin tones. This has expanded the range of patients who can be treated, including male and international patients who may previously have been more challenging to treat, and plays an important role in enabling individualized treatment.
I consider FORTRA to be a lifting and tightening device that reflects a strong understanding of the physical properties of light energy and their clinical application. By incorporating multiple wavelengths, the system is designed to deliver energy efficiently from the superficial dermis to deeper fascial layers. It also incorporates a large spot size to enhance the forward directionality of light, helping clinicians deliver treatment more precisely in line with their intended treatment plan.

How would you explain why Volink 4D may provide more effective lifting and tightening than a single-modality approach, and what mechanisms are involved?

Volkin 4D is a multimodal energy-based lifting and tightening strategy that combines HIFU (SHURINK UNIVERSE), monopolar RF (VOLNEWMER), and Multi-wavelength Diode Laser (FORTRA) to sequentially target multiple tissue layers. Rather than relying on a single mechanism to achieve lifting and tightening, the key concept is to induce structural repositioning at the SMAS layer with HIFU, promote collagen remodeling and mechanical stabilization within the dermis using monopolar RF, and improve both full-thickness dermal remodeling and the optical properties of the skin with a multi-wavelength laser such as FORTRA. This can be understood as an "energy layering" strategy, in which structural change, tissue stabilization, and improvement in skin appearance are addressed at different tissue levels. I believe that this multilayered approach can produce more natural and stable lifting and tightening outcomes.
Facial aging is not simply a matter of reduced skin elasticity. It involves multiple changes occurring simultaneously, including laxity of the SMAS layer, loss of dermal collagen, redistribution of subcutaneous fat, and alterations in the optical

properties of the skin. Because conventional single-modality treatments primarily act on a specific tissue layer, they may have limitations in addressing lifting, tightening, and skin texture at the same time. In my view, one of the key advantages of Volink 4D is that it allows these age-related changes to be approached layer by layer.
First, HIFU creates focal thermal coagulation zones within the SMAS layer, inducing structural repositioning. In other words, it helps reposition lax soft tissue in a more superior direction. Monopolar RF then produces volumetric heating throughout the dermis, promoting collagen remodeling and increasing dermal stiffness to provide mechanical stabilization. This may help support and maintain the structural changes induced by HIFU over time.
Finally, Multi-wavelength Diode Laser creates a more uniform photothermal distribution across the dermis, promoting both dermal remodeling and optical refinement. As skin texture and tone improve, the overall lifting and tightening effect may become more visually apparent.
Ultimately, I believe the core concept of Volink 4D is not any single mechanism, but rather an energy layering strategy that sequentially addresses the SMAS, dermis, and optical characteristics of the skin. The combination of structural repositioning, mechanical reinforcement, and optical refinement is what I consider to be the basis for achieving more stable lifting and tightening outcomes.

How do you approach patient selection for Volink 4D?

I recommend Volink 4D to most patients who are interested in lifting and tightening. However, the energy settings and number of shots delivered with each of the three devices are adjusted according to the individual patient's characteristics and treatment goals. For example, when a patient seeks improvements in both lifting and tightening as well as skin texture, I tend to increase the total energy delivered with FORTRA.
For patients with a larger facial contour or greater facial fat volume, I generally increase the proportion of SHURINK UNIVERSE shots. With VOLNEWMER, I typically maintain the basic treatment protocol while adjusting the energy intensity according to the patient's pain sensitivity. FORTRA is also adjusted based on pain sensitivity, particularly in terms of energy intensity and the degree of stacking, although the overall energy level is kept relatively consistent. For Volink 4D, I consider a treatment interval of approximately three to six months to be appropriate.
I am sometimes asked whether using multiple energy-based modalities in a single treatment could result in excessive energy delivery. In practice, however, this is not necessarily the case. The energy from the different devices does not simply accumulate, because each modality produces its thermal peak at a different tissue depth. Therefore, rather than viewing the treatment as a simple summation of energy, I believe it is more appropriate to understand it as an energy stacking strategy distributed across different tissue layers.

what is the recommended treatment sequence?

I gave considerable thought to the treatment sequence, taking into account both treatment efficacy and potential procedural issues, particularly safety. When all three procedures are performed on the same day, there was initially some concern about the possibility of overlapping energy delivery. However, as clinical experience accumulated, I came to understand the treatment not as a simple summation of energy, but rather as energy stacking distributed across different tissue layers, which helped clarify the optimal treatment approach.

From an anatomical perspective, I considered it reasonable to begin with the deepest target layer. Accordingly, I currently perform the procedures in the following order: SHURINK UNIVERSE, VOLNEWMER, and then FORTRA. This is particularly important for SHURINK UNIVERSE, as it targets the SMAS layer and therefore requires a high degree of accuracy in treatment depth. If another energy-based procedure is performed first, changes in tissue hydration or thermal conditions may potentially affect the precision of ultrasound energy delivery. For this reason, SHURINK UNIVERSE is performed first, followed sequentially by VOLNEWMER and FORTRA. I believe this sequence is more advantageous for achieving stable and consistent treatment outcomes.



Key features of FORTRA's Intensive and Dynamic modes. Courtesy of CLASSYS.

In lifting and tightening treatments using Diode Laser, irradiation speed is considered an important factor. How do you evaluate FORTRA's 40 Hz repetition rate?

A repetition rate of 40 Hz allows a greater amount of energy to be delivered per unit time. However, as energy delivery increases, the potential risks of patient discomfort and treatment-related adverse effects may also increase.
FORTRA addresses these concerns through a sapphire cooling system that can cool the skin surface to as low as –5°C, helping reduce discomfort. In addition, its four-wavelength system, which incorporates 940 nm, helps reduce melanin-dependent surface heating and thereby enhances relative epidermal safety. The higher treatment speed also helps reduce fatigue for both the practitioner and the patient.
Compared with competing devices that use three wavelengths, I would particularly emphasize that FORTRA incorporates four wavelengths. As mentioned earlier, 940 nm has been added to 755 nm, 808 nm, and 1064 nm. The 940 nm wavelength shows relatively high absorption by water, hemoglobin, and fat, allowing it to act within subcutaneous tissue. At the same time, its relatively lower interaction with melanin makes treatment easier to apply in patients with darker skin tones, who may have been more challenging to treat with conventional approaches.

Could FORTRA be considered a type of Genesis technique?

FORTRA shares some similarities with the Genesis technique, but it may be more appropriate to view it as a device with a broader treatment scope rather than as the same concept. While the Genesis technique primarily focuses on improving skin condition by inducing thermal effects within the dermis, FORTRA uses four wavelengths to deliver energy across multiple tissue depths, ranging from the superficial and deep dermis to the SMAS and subcutaneous fat layers. In this sense, FORTRA has a broader range of applications because it targets multiple tissue layers rather than a single layer.
In addition, whereas the Genesis technique is generally characterized by delivering energy primarily to a particular treatment zone, FORTRA distributes energy across different tissue layers through its multiple wavelengths. For this reason, I believe FORTRA is better understood as a more comprehensive treatment concept rather than simply an extension of the Genesis technique.

What immediate and long-term changes can be expected after treatment?

Immediately after treatment, HIFU may induce collagen contraction within the SMAS layer, resulting in an immediate lifting effect. Thermal stimulation of the dermis by RF and laser energy may also make the skin appear tighter. Over the following weeks to months, fibroblast activation and collagen remodeling continue, leading to gradual and longer-term improvements in skin elasticity and tightening.

Many patients who work in broadcasting and entertainment visit our clinic, and FORTRA is frequently chosen before important events such as film or television shoots and photoshoots. Because the treatment can produce an immediate improvement in overall skin condition, including a more even-looking skin tone and a tighter appearance, patient satisfaction tends to be high.

One particularly memorable case involved a female patient with enlarged pores associated with frequent outdoor activity. Previous treatments using other devices or injectables to directly reduce pore size had not produced results that met her expectations. After FORTRA treatment, however, she was highly satisfied, even remarking that she could "finally see what I had paid for." I believe the 755 nm and 808 nm wavelengths of FORTRA contributed to pore tightening by promoting collagen remodeling in the dermis surrounding the pores.

That said, if considering a single treatment modality alone, FORTRA would not necessarily be my first choice for pore treatment. Rather than attempting to address enlarged pores with a single device, I believe a more effective approach is to first induce a primary therapeutic response using a higher-energy modality such as needle RF, and then combine it with FORTRA to improve the dermal environment. I also believe this combination approach is well aligned with current clinical trends.

Are there any indications beyond lifting and tightening for which you use the treatment?

In clinical practice, I also use it to improve overall skin quality, including skin tone uniformity and skin texture. It can be particularly helpful in patients with fine lines, reduced skin elasticity, enlarged pores, or uneven skin tone.

Because it is based on photothermal stimulation with relatively low melanin dependence, I also believe it can be used to improve overall complexion and to support skin condition after pigment treatment.

Personally, rather than viewing this simply as a lifting and tightening treatment, I consider it one of the treatment options that can enhance overall skin quality by improving the dermal environment more comprehensively.

What are the potential issues associated with Volink 4D treatment?

HIFU can potentially affect the facial nerves, so practitioners should have a thorough understanding of facial anatomy before performing treatment. Caution is also required with SHURINK UNIVERSE because unintended fat reduction may occur. With monopolar RF, burns are among the most common potential adverse events. Therefore, during VOLNEWMER treatment, it is important to continuously monitor the patient's level of discomfort and adjust treatment as needed.

FORTRA, as a light-based energy device, may also cause adverse effects depending on the patient's skin condition. Before treatment, the face should be carefully assessed for tattoos, pigmented lesions, and the presence of bruising. If complications such as burns or nerve injury occur, prompt management according to appropriate clinical guidelines is important to minimize the risk of long-term sequelae.

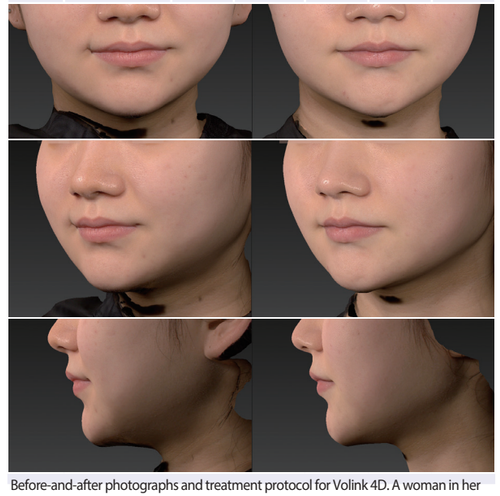
For Volink 4D treatment, pain is typically around 2–3 on the NRS. Temporary edema may occur, but overall, the procedure is associated with minimal downtime.

How would you evaluate profitability since introducing Volink 4D?

Although the price per individual treatment has decreased somewhat compared with the past, overall profitability has actually improved. I believe this is largely because the treatment process has become relatively simpler, while preparation requirements and consumable costs have been reduced, resulting in greater operational efficiency. In addition, the treatment concept can now be explained more clearly during consultation, which has improved patients' understanding of the procedure. As a result, both consultation efficiency and patient turnover have improved. As these operational benefits have accumulated, we have experienced an overall increase in productivity from the clinic's perspective.

The greatest challenge in clinical practice has been the relatively low brand awareness of FORTRA. Our clinic also uses a competing laser device from another company, and it has sometimes been difficult to recommend FORTRA to patients who specifically visit the clinic seeking treatment with the better-known competing device. We have continued to communicate this issue to the CLASSYS marketing team. Given that CLASSYS has announced plans to to place greater emphasis on promoting FORTRA this year, I expect the overall treatment environment to improve further going forward.

Session	Device	Tip / Cartridge	Mode	Energy / Level	PRR / Pulse Count	Shots / Total Energy
1st	HIFU (SHURINK UNIVERSE)	4.5 / 3.0㎜	MP + NOR / NOR	0.8 / 0.4	N/A	200 / 400
	Monopolar RF (VOLNEWMER)	V	REPEAT	3	N/A	300
	Diode Laser (FORTRA)	N/A	Intensive + Dynamic	4.0 / 0.8 J/㎠	5 Stack / 40Hz	10kJ / 30kJ
2nd	Diode Laser (FORTRA)	N/A	Intensive + Dynamic	4.0 / 0.8 J/㎠	5 Stack / 40Hz	10kJ / 30kJ



Before-and-after photographs and treatment protocol for Volink 4D. A woman in her early 30s underwent two sessions of Volink 4D treatment with the primary goal of improving the jawline. Courtesy of Dr. Eun Hyuk Lee.

Live Treatment Demonstration

The patient in this demonstration is a woman in her 30s with relatively little facial fat and comparatively thin skin. Therefore, rather than delivering excessive energy, I considered it important to clearly define the role of each device within the treatment. SHURINK UNIVERSE is primarily used to refine the facial contour. Treatment is performed mainly with the 3.0 mm cartridge while taking care to avoid excessive fat reduction. With VOLNEWMER, stable water cooling allows

treatment to be performed efficiently within the range of approximately 300–400 shots. However, pain can vary considerably depending on the treatment area. Areas with sufficient fat, such as the medial face, tend to be less painful, whereas areas closer to bony structures, such as the jawline, may feel significantly more painful even at the same energy level. In these areas, the energy should be reduced or dispersed using a rubbing technique. It is also important to continuously ensure that the gel is applied evenly across the treatment area. FORTRA has two treatment modes: Intensive mode and Dynamic mode.



Dr. Lee explained, "By utilizing FORTRA's multiple wavelengths, energy can be distributed evenly from the superficial dermis to deeper tissue layers, allowing simultaneous improvement in lifting and skin texture."

Intensive mode delivers overlapping energy to reach deeper tissue layers, whereas Dynamic mode involves continuously moving the handpiece across the skin to distribute energy more evenly throughout the tissue. Because this patient has thin skin and is relatively sensitive to pain, sapphire cooling, which can be set as low as −5°C, is used with an emphasis on safety and pain reduction. Continuous monitoring of the patient's discomfort during treatment is important not only for comfort, but also for preventing adverse effects such as burns.

The clinical strengths of FORTRA are particularly evident in Dynamic mode. Its relatively large tip size enables greater energy delivery per unit time while helping maintain the forward directionality of light. This allows energy to be delivered more accurately to the intended tissue depth. Rather than beginning at the maximum energy level, settings should be gradually adjusted based on the patient's skin thickness, pain sensitivity, and treatment goals. Energy delivery can also be modulated by moving more slowly over areas with a thicker fat layer and more quickly over thinner areas. However, these techniques are best applied after sufficient clinical experience has been accumulated. Because FORTRA is a Multi-wavelength Diode Laser, its energy can interact with melanin and other pigments. Therefore, hair should be thoroughly taped away from the treatment area before the procedure, and any tattoos or pigmented lesions should be identified and appropriately masked. Bruised areas should also be carefully assessed, as the wavelengths may interact with blood components and increase the risk of burns. Thorough history taking and assessment of the patient's skin condition are therefore essential before treatment.

Volink 4D is not simply a combination of three devices. Rather, it is an individualized approach in which the role and relative contribution of each device are adjusted according to the patient's skin characteristics and anatomical features. SHURINK UNIVERSE is used for structural lifting, VOLNEWMER for improving dermal elasticity, and FORTRA for enhancing skin texture, pigmentation, and immediate tightening. Effective treatment therefore requires the ability to tailor both energy intensity and the number of shots to the individual patient.