

Clearing the Air

In today's demanding world of healthcare, two requirements remain – safety and value. Healthcare providers insist that products provide utmost safety, not only for the patient being treated, but also for each healthcare professional involved. They also demand value which continually forces manufacturers to develop products that provide solutions at lower costs.

A prime example is seen in the field of smoke evacuation. As the concern for potential dangers of electrosurgically-generated smoke plume increases among surgical staff who are utilizing this technology, regulations regarding this matter are also on the rise. For example, Rhode Island and Colorado have passed legislation requiring policies in facilities that use electrosurgery; while Oregon, California, Georgia, Kentucky, and others are most likely to follow suit.

Several healthcare societies are recommending the use of smoke evacuation when performing electrosurgical procedures, including the American College of Surgeons (ACS), the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES), and the Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses (AORN).

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One thing appears certain – smoke evacuation is here to stay. This has been more apparent in the hospital operating room environment but is expected to carry over into ambulatory surgery centers, clinics, and physician's offices. Smoke evacuation devices have been on the market for many years and are being produced by several manufacturers.

For facilities seeking to incorporate smoke evacuation, the main issue impeding their adoption has been cost. While inexpensive wall-mounted devices consisting of an ULPA filter placed in-line to connect a suction instrument are available, these devices are not useful in clinics and physician's offices without wall vacuums. The addition of this vacuum source could be more expensive than the electrosurgical unit that generates the smoke.

Dermatologists, for example, employ a high frequency desiccator (lower-wattage electrosurgical unit) in each of their examination rooms. A typical practice may range from as few as six rooms to more than 50 rooms. The cost to outfit each of these rooms with a smoke evacuation device can be significant, up to twice the cost of the ESU itself, and persuade some facilities to delay or even forego such a purchase. This is not an option in locations where legislation mandates smoke evacuation.

Most shelf-mounted smoke evacuation devices on the market today are much larger than the high frequency desiccators they support. With shelf and/or table space at a premium, these facilities struggle to find room for them. With the increased need for a smaller, less costly smoke evacuation device, Symmetry Surgical has introduced the Bovie® Smoke Shark® III. At less than half the cost of existing smoke evacuation systems, the Smoke Shark® III's size and design preserves valuable space in the examination room and saves significant cost.

The Smoke Shark® III includes the Bovie® Smart Shark Remote Activation Switch, a wall mounting bracket, a SharkSkin smoke evacuation pencil adapter, and a four-stage ULPA filter. Smart Shark activates the Smoke Shark® III smoke evacuation device automatically when the electro-surgical pencil's cut or coagulation button is pressed and deactivates it a few seconds after the button is released. This extends filter life by engaging the device only when smoke is being generated, making the filter more cost effective.

The Bovie® SharkSkin smoke evacuation pencil adapter is a perfect accessory for the Smoke Shark® III. The SharkSkin works in tandem to transform an electro-surgical pencil into a device that captures smoke plume at the surgical site. With a more open design on the proximal end, SharkSkin better accommodates the reusable electro-surgical pencils found on high frequency desiccators like the Bovie® DERM and Bantam PRO ESUs.

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With more procedures shifting from the operating room to the outpatient clinic, the need for cost-effective smoke evacuation has never been greater. For specialties such as dermatology, physician's offices, and any electro-surgical customer performing shorter procedures and seeking a more cost-conscious option, the Bovie® Smoke Shark® III provides a unique smoke evacuation solution to make the procedures safer for the surgeon, surgical staff, and the patient. When the electro-surgical market required safety and value, Symmetry Surgical delivered the Bovie® Smoke Shark® III.