overlapping engagement of the flange units, torsional movements between the handles 56a,b are prevented. The flange units can be provided to prevent, or minimize, any torsional forces that might otherwise be generated by the patient interface device 16 against the laser unit 12.

Referring now to Fig. 5, another embodiment is shown for pre-centering the patient interface 16 (see Fig. 1) with the orifice 50 of the base member 22 before the handles 56a and 56b (see Fig. 2) are moved to place grip 18 in its "closed" configuration. With this pre-centering arrangement, stresses on the patient interface 16 and laser unit 12 are reduced when the handles 56a and 56b (see Fig. 2) are moved to place grip 18 in its "closed" configuration. In greater structural detail, as shown in Fig. 5, the pre-centering embodiment includes a vertical support 92 that is affixed to the first side 60 of the base member 22. As further shown, a pair of curved brackets 94a and 94b is affixed to the support 92, and the brackets 94a and 94b are situated across the orifice 50 from each other. As shown, the brackets 94a and 94b extend from the support 92 and over space 96 between the respective brackets 94a,b and base member 22, and they are respectively located adjacent the periphery of the orifice 50. When the patient interface 16 (see Fig. 1) is inserted into the orifice 50 of the base member 22, the brackets 94a,b pre-center the patient interface 16 in the orifice 50. Next, the handles 56a and 56b are moved to place grip 18 in its "closed" configuration. When this is done, the handles 56a and 56b urge the respective brackets 94a and 94b toward each other and into contact with surface 70 of the patient interface 16.