

Hair

TODAY GONE

Tomorrow!

By: Siddhi Patel

THOUGH YOU'D NEVER KNOW IT WHEN YOU SEE THE SMOOTH-SKINNED (AND PHOTOSHOPPED!) MODELS ON TELEVISION AND IN MAGAZINE ADS, UNWANTED BODY HAIR

among women is far more common than you might think. In the real world, most women fight a daily battle with unwanted hair growth on their legs, under their arms, feet, toes, intimate areas, and the face. But now there is new breakthrough laser technology that makes it possible to zap away unwanted hair quickly, easily and with long-term results.

Laser hair removal is the use of laser energy to produce long-term hair reduction. The laser light is attracted to the melanin in the hair follicle, particularly in the bulb and bulge. Heat is collected there, which damages the cells lining the hair follicle and potentially prevents future hair growth by damaging the vascular matrix.

There are several cycles of hair growth and a certain number of hairs may only be growing at a particular time. As a result, it may take multiple treatments for improvement. Generally, a series of five to six treatments are administered at 6- to 12-week intervals depending on the area being treated. Following the initial series of treatments, subsequent treatments are administered, usually at longer intervals. Maintenance treatments may be needed to keep all the hair away in a given area. After a single treatment, the hair in a given area is

usually reduced in amount and thickness for a very long period of time. However, it may not be completely gone. The frequency of maintenance treatments varies considerably from person to person.

As treatments progress, hairs that grow will usually be lighter, finer and possibly more difficult to treat. Usually increasing the energy to achieve greater absorption by these lighter hairs will be more effective. Discomfort is one of the many factors the technician will use to determine the appropriate setting for the laser.

While side effects are quite rare, the possibilities are erythema (redness), edema (swelling), bruising, welting, hyper or hypopigmentation and blisters. Many people often interpret the pigmentary changes they experience in their skin following a laser procedure as scarring, but this is rarely the case. Pigmentary changes following laser procedures will usually resolve in a period of weeks to months. Although the risk of scarring is quite small, it can be minimized by selecting an experienced laser technician who is supervised by a physician.

Each state has its own regulations on who can and cannot utilize a laser. It is the position of

the North Carolina Medical Board that good medical practice requires that each patient be examined by a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner licensed or approved by the board prior to receiving the first laser hair removal treatment and at other times as medically indicated.

There are clinical studies showing improvement of up to 80–90%, but there are no guarantees that every patient will respond with this amount of efficacy. While laser hair removal may seem costly at first, many clients find the treatment's lasting effects and reduced hair growth more than worth the cost. The cost of a laser hair removal treatment varies depending on the area being treated, the clinician performing the treatment, the number of treatments in a package, and other considerations. Many offices will offer a package of treatment sessions at a discount. 🌿



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