



SKIN HEALTH SPA

A Complete Consumer Guide to Laser Hair Removal

Am I a candidate for laser hair removal?

Laser hair removal is not for everyone. In general the requirement is that one's hair must be darker than the surrounding skin. Additionally, very darkly pigmented people may absorb too much laser energy in their skin and may not be candidates. Tanned patients with light hair are not candidates. Tanned patients with dark hair must wait until their tan fades before they can be treated. Lastly, the treatment cost should be within reach of the patient. Laser hair removal, although much less expensive than electrolysis, requires multiple treatments and may cost over £1,000 in total for large areas.

What will laser hair removal cost?

Treatment cost varies with the size of the area treated. Experienced laser centres, which have developed expertise in laser hair removal, generally average £200 for medium sized areas, with an initial 4 to 5 sessions recommended. Large areas, such as an entire back or entire legs can cost over £350 per treatment. Small areas such as an upper lip can be about £75. Individual consultation with the laser centre is necessary to obtain exact pricing.

Influence of skin colour on laser hair removal.

Light skin makes laser hair removal easier to perform. Fewer treatments are required, and better, faster results are obtained. People with darker skin can be treated, but results are slower, more sessions are required, and greater expertise is required on the part of the laser centre. Laser hair removal must be individualised for each patient.

Influence of hair colour on laser hair removal.

Dark hair absorbs more laser energy and is easier to treat. Coarse dark hair responds the best to laser hair removal. Light hair is more difficult to treat. Blonde or red hair is very difficult to treat. Multiple treatment sessions are required and results are variable. Blonde or red hair usually contains pheomelanin which absorbs laser energy less avidly than the eumelanin which is present in black or brown hair.

Laser hair removal requires multiple treatments.

Although one laser session can produce long-term hair removal, as a rule multiple sessions are necessary to obtain optimal results. In large part this is due to the fact that laser hair removal is most effective for hair in the anagen phase. Anagen is the growth phase of hair. Since hair grows in cycles, not all the hairs are in anagen at any given time. Additional sessions are necessary to catch all of the hairs when they are in anagen.

What areas can be treated?

Any area except adjacent to the eye, where there is excess hair. The most common areas requested are the face, upper lip, neck, chest, underarms, back, abdomen, bikini line and legs.

About permanent hair reduction by laser.

Waxing, shaving, plucking and the use of Nd:Yag laser all produce hair removal which is temporary. Several of the newer lasers have clearly documented that there is permanent hair reduction after each treatment. The FDA in the US has approved three lasers for permanent hair reduction, and more results with additional lasers are pending. In Europe the Plasmalite pulsed light system has also proven permanent in hair reduction. The results tend to be additive, i.e. more treatments lead to greater degrees of permanent hair reduction. For any given patient

results cannot be predicted precisely. Results can be variable, even with the best lasers.

Pulsed light and hair removal.

Intense pulsed light devices can produce effective hair removal. Although these devices are not lasers, they are laser equivalents & Mac226; utilising the same principle of selective photothermolysis to achieve hair removal. These devices are in practice more difficult to adjust than lasers and require great expertise for their proper use.

Myths 1:

Guarantees in laser hair removal. It is impossible to predict the exact result a patient will achieve with laser hair removal, especially with regard to how many sessions a given individual will require. Many of the hair removal clinics which guarantee results have gone out of business. Like most reputable medical practices, the most established laser hair removal clinics do not guarantee results.

Myths 2:

Discount laser hair removal clinics. Established medical centres with excellent reputations do not discount their fees. Patients know their reputation and rely upon their experience and expertise. The same is true for laser hair removal. Consumers are advised, as with all forms of medical care, to seek the centre of highest quality, rather than lowest cost. Stand alone clinics who specialise in laser treatments, as opposed to operators who rent space in salons, can provide patients with the assurance of long term individual attention, experience and a trained, caring, professional staff.

Myths 3:

Laser hair removal limitation of effectiveness. Contrary to the statements of those unfamiliar with this new technology, laser hair removal is effective when properly performed for the greatest majority of candidates. Non-responders are usually limited to those with blond or red hair.

Qualifications of laser hair removal personnel.

A laser clinic should be registered with the local health authority under the provisions of the Registered Homes act 1984. This act requires that treatment using laser can only be performed by a Medical Doctor or Registered Nurse. Electrologists, Medical Assistants and other unlicensed personnel cannot perform laser hair removal.

Importance of experience in selecting a laser hair removal facility.

Experience is crucial in selecting the proper laser parameters to use for any given area for any individual patient. Centres with the most experience generally have the best results.

Tanning and laser hair removal.

Tanning and laser hair removal are not compatible. Tanning prior to the procedure will necessitate turning the power down, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the treatment.

Adverse treatment reactions.

Pigmentary change of the skin treated can occur, including either dark or light areas. Pigmentary changes may persist for months, but are almost always temporary. They are very rare in patients with fair skin who are untanned. Blisters and burns are rare but occasionally occur, particularly in patients with dark skin.

Diet and laser hair removal.

Diet is generally unrelated, except for Beta-Carotene, which interferes with the treatment.

Beta-Carotene and laser hair removal.

Beta-Carotene, found in carrots, vitamin A supplements, squash and other vegetables, is deposited in the skin, producing a subtle orange or yellow colour in the skin. This pigment

absorbs laser energy in the skin. Beta-Carotene persists for months after ingestion. Patients interested in the best results from laser hair removal will benefit from discontinuation of the use of all forms of Beta-Carotene.

Laser Hair Removal - Children

It is the policy of Laser Aesthetics that we do not treat children under the age of 18 for hair removal. It is advisable to allow hormone levels to settle down before commencing laser treatment.

Laser hair removal for Afro- Caribbean skin.

The darker one's skin the more difficult it is to obtain adequate results from laser hair removal. The darker one's skin the more sessions are required and the greater the chance of adverse results. Laser hair removal can be successful for Afro-Caribbean's with light skin and coarse dark hair.

Laser hair removal for other people of colour.

The best results are obtained when the hair to be treated is considerably darker than the surrounding skin. Also coarse hair is easier to remove. Fine, light hair in people of colour is difficult to remove.

Who should not have laser hair removal.

Patients with a recently required dark tan. Blondes or redheads with any recent tan. People of colour with fine, light hair. Anyone who cannot afford multiple sessions (one treatment is rarely adequate).

How to assess a laser hair removal facility.

Research the qualifications of the Doctor or Nurse. Is the clinic registered with the local health authority? Is it a stand alone centre specialising in laser treatments? Is the atmosphere professional? What type of laser does the clinic use?