

The Hair Removal eBook!

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INDEX

<i>Introduction</i>	3
Precaution: Excessive Hair Growth Condition	3
<i>Temporary Hair Removal: Benefits and Cost</i>	4
Shaving	4
Waxing	4
Tweezing	4
Epilating	5
Threading	5
Hair Removal Creams and Sprays	5
Topical Medication	6
<i>Permanent and Prolonged Reduction: Benefits and Cost</i>	6
Electrolysis	6
Laser Hair Removal	7
Intense Pulsed Light (IPL)	10
Cost of Permanent/Prolonged Reduction Methods	11
What If I Have a Skin Condition?	11
<i>Conclusion</i>	12

Introduction

If you've downloaded this eBook looking for new or more effective ways to remove unsightly hair, you're in luck. This comprehensive eBook will detail the benefits and cost of almost all methods currently available to you. There are so many different methods of hair removal that it can get a bit overwhelming deciding what's best for yourself, but after reading this, you should be able to determine which method will best suit your particular needs.

Most women, and increasing number of men, are incorporating hair removal as part of their grooming regimen. Women tend to be concerned with removing hair on their faces, legs, underarms and bikini area, whereas men typically want to remove hair from their back or chest. A lot of time and money can be put into various forms of hair removal, but very few offer permanent or prolonged reduction of growth. In fact, there are only three methods that can lead to permanent or long-term reduction of hair: laser hair removal, IPL (Intense Pulsed Light) and electrolysis. All three methods have been studied and proven to result in long term absence of hair, but only electrolysis is recognized by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) as permanent. The other common and temporary methods tend to be inexpensive, but typically require constant attention and repetition, which can add up dramatically.

Precaution: Excessive Hair Growth Conditions

Excessive hair growth on women (and men) can be indicative of a medical disorder, referred to as hirsutism. There can be a number of medical reasons why people are experiencing an increase of hair growth, but these conditions are usually related to hormonal imbalances like the excessive production of androgens (male hormones). A common female condition called Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (which affects 5-15% of females of reproductive age) can lead to excess hair growth. Excess hair growth due to hormonal imbalances is more common in women, and although it can also occur in men, it is more difficult to recognize because males are generally expected to be hairier than women. Hirsutism can be extremely distressing for a woman, causing psychological issues such as social anxiety and depression.

There are a number of other conditions that can increase androgens in a female, but regardless of the cause, what many women with excess hair growth have in common is the desire to remove the hair. If you think you might have symptoms of a hormonal imbalance, such as abnormal growth of hair, a doctor should be consulted to determine the underlying causes before a proactive hair removal treatment is started as someone with hormonal issues probably won't see good results from laser hair removal until the condition has been cured.

Now let's explore the plethora of hair removal methods.

Temporary Hair Removal: Benefits and Cost

Shaving

One of the easiest and cheapest ways to remove unwanted hair, shaving, can also be one of the most irritating for the skin. Shaving can easily cause skin irritation along with cuts, nicks and bleeding. In order to minimize the type of irritation that occurs during a shaving, a high quality razor along with some type of shaving cream should be used. Slow and gentle movements with the razor are also recommended. Those who have tried shaving and found it too irritating for their skin should consider looking into alternative hair removal options.

Shaving is widely considered the cheapest form of hair removal. Though commonplace and practical for men to shave their faces, the opposite is true for women. In fact, women who have shaved their faces quickly find that the hair can grow back darker and thicker than before, and is thus not recommended.

Waxing

Waxing has a clear advantage in that it's a quick way to have hair-free skin for several weeks. But at the same time, waxing can also be very painful and cause severe skin irritation, because it pulls not only on the hair but your skin as well. Those with sensitive skin will often find that their skin is red and extra sensitive after a hair removal waxing session. Breakouts and bumps that resemble small pimples are very common, and in addition, inflammation and bruises can also result from waxing.

Waxing is described by many people as the most painful thing they have ever experienced. It is right in the moment where the wax is being ripped from the skin that hurts the most. However, the pain will usually subside after the first couple of strips because your body will release its own painkiller hormones called endorphins. Other than taking a painkiller prior to treatment, there isn't much else one can do to ease the pain of waxing. Though the cost of one waxing session or jar of wax to use at home might seem nominal, it will most definitely add up over time.

Tweezing

This inexpensive method consists of using a pair of tweezers to pluck individual hairs. Though it allows for better sculpting control when doing eyebrows, it is quite time consuming to do any other part of your body, and a little painful. A pair of good tweezers can be obtained from any beauty store, with some definitely being more effective than others.

Epilating

Epilators are electrical handheld tools that grasp and pull out many hairs at once. They've been around for several decades and are still used by many women as new and improved epilators are constantly being introduced to the market.

An epilator can be used on the face and body and, like waxing, has an advantage over shaving because it extracts hairs by the root, which leads to smoother skin. Some prefer it to waxing as there is no mess involved. However, many women feel that epilators are very painful, almost in a torturous way. The epilator needs to be moved in repetitive strokes, until all hair appears to be gone, but some people find it difficult to master the technique and are left with stubble. Others also find this hair removal method to be time consuming.

Epilators can be found for as little as \$20 to as much as \$200 or more. Keep in mind that most epilators will be considered a final purchase since they are a personal item which cannot be re-sold after the package has been opened. You should definitely do your research and read reviews before going out and making such a large purchase.

Threading

Threading is an ancient hair removal practice from the Middle East that is slowly gaining popularity in the Western world. It works by wrapping a cotton thread around each individual hair in a tiny lasso and pulling the hair out from the follicle.

Threading can be done at home although it is difficult to master but is best done in a threading salon. Although fairly inexpensive, the technique is much more drawn out than waxing and can feel like slow, torturous process. Most threading sessions tend to be in the \$10-20 range.

Hair Removal Creams and Sprays

Hair removal sprays and creams are depilatories, meaning they contain ingredients that break the bonds of hair, which is what holds the hair up. When the bonds are broken down, the hairs will become loose and can easily be wiped away. Most of these products will remove hair fast and easy, however, if there is a lot of hair or if the hair is thick, the product might need to be left in a little longer or several applications may be needed.

There is usually no pain during the process of removing hair with any type of depilatory and that is why this type of product has become so popular. However, some people with sensitive skin might experience slight skin irritation. Most hair removal sprays can be found for around \$10 dollars in major convenience stores and come under several different brands. Each

individual will have a different experience, but the skin should stay smooth for about 2-3 weeks.

Topical Medication

Vaniqa® (Eflornithine) is a prescription facial cream that works by slowing the growth of facial hair. It can only be obtained through a doctor and is considerably pricey, costing anywhere between \$40-100 for a month's supply. It needs to be applied twice a day and can take weeks to months to start working. Studies of eflornithine's effectiveness show that 81% of those treated show improvements after one year. The hair will still need to be removed by waxing, tweezing or another preferred method. Common side effects include acne and inflammation of the skin.

Permanent and Prolonged Reduction: Benefits and Cost

Electrolysis

With electrolysis, a fine needle-shaped metal probe which carries an electrical current is inserted into the hair follicle and destroys the hair follicle at the root. Unlike most other hair removal methods, electrolysis is the only treatment recognized by the FDA as permanent hair removal, though others can also obtain permanent results. But as there are no guarantees in any hair removal, there is always a small risk that the hairs will grow back at some point, often due to changes in hormone levels. What this means is that hairs are likely to disappear for a longer period of time, for several years or decades, but touch up sessions can be needed in order to eliminate any re-growth.

While electrolysis definitely seems like the perfect solution to eliminating unwanted hair, it does have its disadvantages. Since each hair follicle needs to be treated separately, electrolysis becomes a time consuming process, with as many as 15-30 sessions at a cost of anywhere between \$25-200 per session, being needed to achieve optimum results. Because of this, treating larger areas is impractical and electrolysis is mostly used to eliminate hairs on the chin, upper lip and eyebrow areas. Also, there is a small risk of skin damage such as scarring, pitting or enlarged pores. This risk becomes larger if the practitioner who will be performing the treatment is inexperienced.

Electrolysis is often explained to be somewhat painful. Numbing creams are not usually used, but it is possible to take a painkiller before treatment.

One big advantage to electrolysis is that it does not matter what the hair looks like. The hair can be thin or coarse, light or dark. In other words, electrolysis is efficient on all hair types, including 'peach fuzz.'

Laser Hair Removal

Of all the methods, laser hair removal has the facets and thus requires the most understanding before being able to make the decision that it's right for you. It is a safe and efficient way of getting rid of unwanted hair on nearly any part of the face and body and though several treatments are needed, most people that choose this method are very pleased with the results.

To achieve this, a laser is used to damage the hair follicle to the point where it cannot grow back. The laser is mainly attracted to dark hair, and since 'peach fuzz' is not dark enough the laser cannot properly treat it. Laser hair removal did not appear on the market until the '90s and has consistently improved in terms of effectiveness, so in medical terms it is still too early to evaluate its permanent or life-long results. However, the concept "long-term results" is a common way of describing what can be expected. Long-term results usually means that after an observation period of 10 years or more, there has not been a recurrence of hair growth.

Today's laser devices can safely remove, or at least reduce, unwanted hair virtually anywhere. Visits can range anywhere from just a few minutes to a few hours. For instance, the lip may be a five-minute procedure, but a person's back or legs may take considerably longer.

Frequency of Treatments

Three to six visits every four to six weeks, along with maintenance treatment is advised. Depending on the area and the patient, a touch-up may have to be repeated every three months to a year. However, some people may not need to have further treatments for years. Scientific studies with follow-up periods of up to two years after treatment show satisfactory results.

Most people tolerate the treatments well, but some experience a mild stinging or a tingling sensation as the pulse laser light is administered. Most laser hair removal operators reduce the heat sensation by running some type of cooling device, such as a fan, during the patient's exposure to it. Pain medications or anesthesia is not generally necessary, but a topical cream can be applied if sensitivity occurs.

While it is possible to see results even after just one session, it will probably be just a small reduction, not full disappearance of all hair. This is because hair grows in three different phases

and laser hair removal can only target the hair that is in the growing phase. The result, however, does not include hair that appears because of hormonal changes in the body. While the exact number of sessions needed in order to see results varies, it is quite common to see an obvious difference after three sessions. In fact, the majority of people will need between three and six sessions in order to see satisfactory results.

About one month after the first laser hair removal session some of the hair might be gone, but some hair might also be growing back. The hair that is growing back is the new set of hairs that was unaffected by the previous session and that needs to be treated. Sometimes, even hair follicles that were treated will grow back, because they were not damaged enough during the laser session, and this can be the result of the wrong laser machine, setting the laser's output too low, or an inexperienced practitioner. However, sometimes hair will grow back even though all parameters were appropriate.

What to Do In Between Sessions

Many individuals who frequently remove their unwanted hair are used to the instant gratification of seeing the hairs being removed the second they want to. But in contrast to most of these hair removal methods, laser hair removal does not extract the hairs immediately. The client will instead need to wait until the hairs are pushed out by the skin, but once they are, the skin should stay smooth for weeks to come.

After a laser hair removal session, hairs will typically shed and the treated area will be hair free for a couple of weeks, until it is time for the untreated hairs to grow. During this period it might be tempting to wax or pluck these hairs, but there is strong reason not to. Once the laser hair removal sessions have started, most clinics will advise their clients to only shave between sessions. During shaving, only the hair on the surface is removed and the hair root remains intact. The light from the laser hair removal device is attracted to melanin, which is found in your hair. The heat energy from the laser will target the melanin and thereby destroy the hair follicle. So in order for laser hair removal to be effective, the root has to at least be there.

Hair grows in different phases: the active growth phase, transition phase, and resting phase. It is only the growing hair that can be destroyed. The hair that is in resting phase is not affected by the laser. When passive hair follicles become active you will need a new treatment.

Understanding hair growth and how it relates to laser hair removal

Hair naturally grows in three different phases: anagen, catagen and telogen. Anagen is the active phase where the hair is growing to its full extent. Catagen is the short transitional phase where the hair is slowing down and getting weaker. The telogen phase is the final phase where hairs are resting and will eventually fall off. About 80-90% percent of all hairs are in the growing phase at any given time and laser hair removal will be able to target those hairs. However, this

also means that 10-20% of the hairs will not be affected and must be targeted in an upcoming session. Hair that is visible to the eye is in the anagen phase and is growing, but hair that is in the catagen or telogen phase will be unaffected by laser hair removal, because it is not capable of absorbing the laser.

The way in which hair grows makes it impossible for laser hair removal to target all hair in one session. Even hairs that have been treated may grow back, albeit thinner and shorter.

Types of Lasers

There are several different laser types that can be used when undergoing laser hair removal. They all have their pros and cons, though there is certainly one that will be best for your specific hair and skin type.

The Diode laser is one of the most commonly used lasers on the laser hair removal market. In comparison with other lasers, the risk of skin damage is very small. The Diode laser usually comes with a cooling system that cools down the skin and protects it during treatment. This laser is versatile and can be used on different types of skin. It is favored by many practitioners and can cover large areas fast and efficiently, usually within minutes.

The Alexandrite laser is another common laser type which is also fast and efficient. This laser is popular mostly because its ability to quickly cover large areas of the body. The Alexandrite laser can treat many different types of hair and can be adapted to the size of the area treated and the coarseness of the hair. This laser might also come with a cooling system. The only downside to this laser is that it can cause pigment changes in people who do not have very light colored skin.

The Long Pulse Nd: YAG laser can be used on all skin types, including dark skin and tanned patients. It is fast and can treat large areas. However, many patients experience pain and discomfort with this system. This laser can be considered if you have dark skin or very coarse hair. It does not work as well on light and fine hair.

The Ruby laser is proven to be effective, but is considered “old fashioned” and is rapidly decreasing in popularity, mainly because faster, safer and more effective lasers are now available on the market. The Ruby laser is not suitable for people with dark skin and only covers small areas at a time. This laser is most effective when used on people who have light skin.

Risks

Laser hair removal could potentially cause some sort of temporary or permanent damage to the skin. While permanent damage is very rare, there is still a small risk, no matter how tiny. This is because it is sometimes hard to predict how the skin will react to the laser, and certain

individuals have sensitive/reactive skin that is more prone to damage. An example of permanent damage that could occur is hypo- and hyperpigmentation, which means lightening and darkening of the skin. While these two conditions can certainly go away on their own, there is a small risk that they can stay permanent.

Other risks to laser hair removal include burning, blistering and scarring of the skin. While blistering and scarring are very rare risks, burning is slightly more common. Burning can occur when the laser machine setting is too high. In order to avoid these and other risks, potential clients should make sure they are being treated by a highly experienced practitioner. Cheap clinics with rates that are too good to be true should be avoided, as these places often have inexperienced staff and subpar laser machines.

Individuals with tanned and dark skin need to be extra careful in choosing the right laser clinic, because not every practitioner has experience in treating all skin types. Darker skin tends to absorb more of the laser light and caution is required in order not to burn or damage the skin. While there certainly are a few risks when it comes to laser hair removal, it is important to remember that any lasting damage to the skin is very rare, especially in the hands of an experienced practitioner.

Intense Pulsed Light (IPL)

Though IPL is not a laser, it can be compared to one. The main technological difference between the two is that a laser uses one specific wavelengths of light, while IPL uses a full spectrum. In short, IPL uses intense light pulses instead of laser rays.

IPL and lasers work in similar ways by sending light into the hair follicles. The light absorbs in the hair follicle, turns into heat and destroys it. IPL was developed to treat skin conditions and patients observed hair loss as a result, which resulted in its cosmetic use today.

Some claim that IPL is a faster hair removal solution than laser, because it can take larger areas at once. Others claim that laser is by far more efficient, especially the Diode laser, and that IPL hair removal is often more time consuming and more costly than laser hair removal.

Though newer technology has made it possible for laser and IPL to treat all kinds of hair, they are not the most effective hair removal solutions when there is no pigment in the hair. This means that light-colored hair, such as white, grey and red hairs do not respond very well to IPL treatments.

Cost of Permanent/Prolonged Reduction Methods

Laser hair removal can seem expensive at first, but once the cost of temporary methods have been added together, the price will seem more appealing. IPL and electrolysis can also come off as pricey at first, but the potential payoff can be rewarding. The cost of each session will depend on many different factors, such as geography, how expensive the clinic in question is and which body area is being treated. To remove hair on the upper lip and chin with any of these methods could run anywhere between \$1000 to \$2000 or more.

What If I Have a Skin Condition?

When it comes to permanent hair removal methods, most contraindications involve laser and IPL. While it may be tempting to go for a laser hair removal session regardless of any skin condition, it can possibly lead to side effects, so it is recommended to consult a dermatologist before making any decisions. Only a doctor can truly determine if a certain skin condition can handle a laser session.

Being sunburned is perhaps one of the more common skin conditions where laser hair removal cannot be performed. A laser hair removal machine produces heat and adding heat to an area that already is already sunburnt will make it worse. Clients with skin that has hypertrophic scarring or keloid formation can sometimes undergo laser hair removal but should have lower settings in order to avoid complications. Individuals with vitiligo or psoriasis may want to avoid laser hair removal altogether as the laser can potentially cause lesions to the area.

If there is any type of inflammation or infection in the skin, heat related hair removal would also not be advisable. An area of the face or body that is trying to recover from such a condition must not be treated with any cosmetic procedures. In such cases, clients must wait until the skin has healed before a session can take place. With many skin conditions, the main concern is the amount of heat that will be applied to the skin, because the skin must be able to handle this heat. Sick or fragile skin will become worse if it gets burnt by the heat. What feels like a mild sunburn can be expected from a standard laser hair removal session, but ill skin may not be able to handle this type of side effect.

Certain skin conditions might improve from laser hair removal treatments. These include folliculitis and keratosis pilaris. The theory is that by removing the hair follicle the skin condition will improve. But just as with standard laser hair removal where there are no skin conditions, several treatments will be needed. Several sessions will need to be scheduled a few weeks apart until all hairs have been treated. Occasionally, hairs can be stubborn or grow back for other reasons and maintenance sessions might also be needed. IPL (Intense Pulsed Light) treatments also have a reputation for being beneficial when it comes to skin conditions such as age spots, freckles, rosacea, birthmarks, unsightly veins and acne scars.

Conclusion

Now that you have an informed perspective on the many different choices at your disposal, you should be able to determine which method will best suit your needs. Many of us have hair on our bodies that we're ashamed of that might prevent us from getting a consultation with a specialist, but it's important to remember that these specialists have seen all cases of undesired hair! Because their services and expertise may vary, it's also important to fully inquire into their reputations and prices, with the most reliable sources usually being word or mouth or trusted internet forums.

Many more articles related to hair removal can be found on [HairRemoval.org's blog](#), so don't hesitate to peruse all of our posts. Here's to a more beautiful you!