

Laser Hair Removal

Background

- Lasers can be used to remove unwanted facial and body hair safely and effectively.
- Removing the unwanted hair often requires a few office visits. Most patients need between 2 to 6 treatments and can have laser hair removal once every 4 to 6 weeks.
- Most patients are free of the unwanted hair for several months. When the hair regrows, there tends to be less than before and it is also usually finer and lighter in color.
- Laser hair removal can be repeated when the hair regrows.
- Before getting laser hair removal, it is essential that you tell us about all of your medical conditions, in particular: tendency to scar, recent tan, history of cold sores or genital herpes, or if you are currently taking isotretinoin (a medicine used to treat severe acne).

What Happens When I Get Laser Hair Removal?

- Before the treatment, the area to be treated will be cleansed. Some patients receive a numbing gel. Numbing the area to be treated helps when a small area will be treated and the skin is very sensitive. It takes about 30 to 60 minutes for a numbing gel to work.
- The laser treatment will take place in a room set up specifically for laser treatments. Everyone in the room must wear protective eyewear during the procedure. To perform the procedure, the skin is held taut and the skin is treated with the laser. Many patients say that the laser pulses feel like warm pinpricks or a rubber band being snapped against the skin.
- A laser removes hair by vaporizing it. This causes small plumes of smoke that have a sulfur-like smell.
- Laser hair removal generally does not require any real downtime. Immediately after having laser hair removal, your treated skin will be red and swollen. Despite this, most people return to their everyday activities.

Post-Procedure Instructions:

- To avoid possible side effects, all patients need to protect their skin from the sun. Avoid direct sunlight from hitting your treated skin.
- Do not use a tanning bed, sun lamp, or any other indoor tanning equipment.

Expected and Adverse Results

- You will likely see the results immediately after treatment. The results vary from patient to patient. The color and thickness of your hair, area treated, type of laser used, and color of your skin all affect the results. You can expect a 10% to 25% reduction in hair after the first treatment.

- You will see some redness and swelling after treatment. The most common side effects are minor and last 1 to 3 days. This often looks like a mild sunburn. Applying a cool compress can help reduce your discomfort.
- Rarely, burns, permanent changes to your skin color, and scars can occur.