

Summary

Hair Laser Removal

What? Laser hair removal is a medical procedure that uses a laser to remove hair for extended time periods. An intense pulsating beam of light is used to remove unwanted hair. Lasers for hair removal were approved in 1995 by the FDA. Laws regarding use of lasers vary from state to state.

Why? Some states allow estheticians or electrologists to perform laser hair removal. Some states require some form of medical supervision. Lasers are focused, single colored light that is beamed through a special chamber that contains some sort of chemical. What makes one laser differ from another is the wavelength of the light, the type of material in the chamber (such as Nd: YAG, which stands for neodymium: yttrium aluminum garnet).

A newer laser treatment device is the fractional laser. Fractional lasers are used to treat wrinkles, photo damage, mild scarring, and hyperpigmentation. They are referred to as Fraxel® laser. The fractional laser works on smaller areas of skin because the laser is split into thousands of columns. The client will get results over a series of treatments with less severe and fewer side effects. Treatments are performed in the plastic surgeon's office. Anesthetics are applied to the area before the procedure.

Treatments usually take about 30 minutes. The skin is tight and pink. Swelling and peeling may occur the first few days after treatment.

How does it relate to the skin? A laser beam travels through the skin to the individual hair follicle. The intense heat from the laser damages the hair follicle, which slows future hair growth. The newer lasers can cover a larger area at one time and with less pain than the original YAG lasers. Different types of lasers are used in spas and doctors clinics. Most are nonablative, which means that they do not destroy or peel the skin. They are not the same type of lasers used in laser resurfacing. Lasers that peel the skin are known as ablative lasers. Lasers can be used for surface lines and wrinkles and minor scarring. The procedure is controlled by how many passes the patient has. The esthetician should perform at least one deep-cleansing procedure, removing impactions such as comedones and or milia. Some clients will require more than one session for cleansing. Blistering, hypopigmentation, hyperpigmentation, scarring, and itching can occur after a treatment. A series of treatments can be performed weekly for six weeks before surgery. They should consist of light exfoliation using 20 - 30 percent AHA, which will help remove dead-cell buildup and help with clogged follicles.

Pre-care allows the skin to be in good shape before the resurfacing. The theory is that skin in good condition will heal better and have fewer potential complications than skin in poor condition. The esthetician should consult with the client and instruct them in a postoperative home-care program. The client should have products for home care..

The client should have a camouflage makeup and be given instructions on how to use it. A makeup lesson should be given to the client two to three weeks after the resurfacing.

Where does it typically occur? Plastic surgeons usually refers clients for esthetic treatment usually around 11 to 12 days post-laser and after the skin is healed enough so that there are no longer raw, areas and risks of infection. The surgeon removes sutures before referral to an esthetician if a procedure such as a facelift has been done. Hair removal is done in various places on the human body. Some people just get their facial hair laser removed. Darker skin patients have to be careful of the side effect of hypopigmentation in laser treated areas. Lasers can work on different problems. When the wavelength varies the laser can focus on blood vessels (broken capillaries or telangiectasia), hyperpigmentation (lentigines or melasma), or other problem areas. CO2 and erbium lasers are used together by some surgeons. Some surgeons also use a laser at the same time as they perform another procedure such as a face lift. Lasers can also be used on areas such as around the mouth and eyes. Side effects can occur during recovery from laser surgery. The esthetician can play a role in managing and controlling these esthetic side effects. The surgeon will meet with the patient several weeks before the surgery. Medical pre-care usually consists of use of either Retin-A® or an alpha hydroxy acid (AHA) home-care products Use of a melanin suppressant such as a 4 percent hydroquinone may be used to help prevent hyperpigmentation that may result as a side effect of the laser treatment.

When? (Implications) Lasers are performed in a doctor's office or laser hair removal center. An esthetician is trained in laser hair removal, she is a laser technician for that laser service. Two types of lasers are being used for skin resurfacing. They are carbon dioxide (CO2) and erbium. The CO2 laser is usually stronger and a better choice for deeper lines & wrinkles and more severe sun damage. CO2 should not be used on the neck as the skin on the neck is not as thick as facial skin. Erbium lasers is are usually used for a freshening procedure in younger clients and clients with less severe wrinkling An esthetician should be trained to recognize conditions such as infection .Hyperpigmentation is a problem for some patients after laser resurfacing. If the client has lighter there is less chance of hyperpigmentation. Lasers are not a good choice for a patient who experiences hyperpigmentation easily. Check your state laws. Each state is different some states require you to work underneath a doctors license and some states will let an advanced esthetician do the laser work alone.

Who benefits from this? People benefit who have light skin and dark hair because the laser beam targets the pigment (melanin) in the hair. Nothing permanently stops hair growth, but laser treatments greatly diminish hair growth in that area. The erbium laser is primarily used for a freshening procedure in younger clients or clients with less severe wrinkling. Depending on the laser and client you must go in sessions. Usually the typical diagnosis is 4-6 treatments in a row.

What causes this? Advances in technology have made laser hair removal an option for people with darker skin with different kinds of lasers and new techniques. In many states, regulations allow for only a doctor to treat with laser. When the pigment absorbs the laser light, it damages the hair follicle preventing new growth. This will stunt the hair growth for a good amount of time. The hair will eventually come back if there are no future laser treatments being administered.

How? Solution (Mechanical / Machine) Laser hair removal slows hair growth. It may take several laser hair removal treatments to benefit the client The pain felt during a laser treatment can be increased by the fact that a client is on their menstrual cycle or is taking antibiotics, or Retin-A. The laser technician must know about all medications as this could possibly cause

hypopigmentation depending on the client and laser.

How? Solution (Non Mechanical) It is important not to tweeze hair before laser treatments since the follicle must have a hair bulb in it. Shaving works best before laser treatments. Waxing would also be another way of removing hair that should be steered away from if you are receiving a laser hair removal treatment.

Institute of Epidermal cell Therapy