

Laser Hair Removal Pre-/Post Care Instructions

Pre-Treatment instructions:

- o No prolonged sun exposure or artificial tanning during the last 48 hours or expect to have prolonged sun exposure during the upcoming month.
- o History of herpes or cold sores may require an anti-viral prescription prior to treatment.
- o Hair removal therapy will consist of multiple treatments given over several months.
- o There may be some discomfort or pain associated with the treatment.
- o Transient erythema/edema may appear immediately following the treatment.
- o There is a small risk of adverse reactions, such as changes in the texture and pigmentation of the skin, which are usually transient.
- o **Be certain to shave the treatment area 12 to 24 hours prior to treatment.**
- o Do not wear make-up on the treated area the day of treatment.
- o **No waxing, plucking, or tweezing at least 8 weeks prior to your treatment.**
- o Avoid products that may irritate the skin for 1 to 2 weeks prior to treatment (depilatories, harsh chemicals, etc.)
- o Some medications or supplements may increase the risk of bruising. Consult with your physician.
- o Notify the clinic with any changes to your health history or medications since your last appointment.

Post-treatment care:

- o If the area is uncomfortable, cold (not frozen) packs could be applied following the treatment to cool the treatment site, reduce swelling, and ease discomfort.
- o Redness and perifollicular edema (looks like a rash/bug bites) are common and resolve with time.
- o Bruising and swelling are less common but may occur and will resolve with time .
- o Hair may take up to 2 weeks to fall out .
- o Avoid skin irritants (examples below) a few days post-treatment
- o Products containing tretinoin, retinol, benzoyl peroxide, glycolic/salicylic acids, astringents, etc.
- o Do not wax or pluck between treatments.
- o Notify clinic of any concerns (blistering, excessive redness/swelling, etc.).
- o Consult with clinic about when to resume skin care regime.
- o Care should be taken to prevent trauma to the treated area for the first 4 to 5 days following the treatment: Avoid hot baths, aerobic exercise, sauna, massage etc.
- o Exposure to sunlight-apply high factor sun protection (SPF >30), and protect the treated area from exposure to direct sunlight for at least 1 month post treatment. Tanning after treatment sessions may enhance melanin regeneration, which may result in hyper-pigmentation.
- o Make-up may be applied on the day following treatment unless blistering or crusts develop. Since the skin is sensitive during this period, take special care while removing make-up to avoid damage to the skin, which can predispose the site to infection.
- o Other post-treatment recommendations-if the treatment site is exposed to dirt, it should not be covered with a dressing for 10 days. Be advised not to participate in rough sports or similar activities for several days following the treatment, until the skin returns to its normal condition.

Follow-up:

- o Hair removal requires a series of treatments. The number of treatments depends on body location and type of hair.
- o Return for examination of the treatment site between 6 to 8 weeks after the treatment and for additional treatment if necessary. If no additional treatment is necessary, the patient should return for an additional reexamination 3 to 4 months later, or when any new hair has grown in the treatment area.
- o If there has been partial hair clearance, treatment to be continued and the patient should return between 6 to 8 weeks for examination and for additional treatment, if necessary.

The Hair Growth Cycle:

- o The hair growth cycle consists of three stages of growth: anagen, catagen, and telogen. At any given time, hair can be in all three stages of the growth cycle. Anagen/active growth, when the hair follicle is in the bulb, is the only hair that can be targeted by laser hair removal. Hair in catagen and telogen stages, are in types of shedding stages and will enter the antigen stage later and appear as "new growth." This is the reason that hair removal generally requires more than one treatment.

- o Average number of treatments is 5-8
- o Treatment intervals are 6 to 12 weeks depending on the body part being treated.
- o The laser only targets hair in the "active" growth phase and there is no advantage to scheduling visits closer together.