



LASER HAIR REMOVAL

Energy from the laser is absorbed by melanin (the dark pigment in hair and skin) and is converted into heat. Laser hair removal works on the premise that a hair is darker than the skin, thus allowing a pigmented hair to be burnt by the laser without also burning the skin. It is ineffective on blonde or red hair, and risky on tanned or dark skin. It is important that a tanned person waits for the tan to fade before attempting laser hair removal. The best results are obtained on people with light-colored skin and coarse dark hair. Long pulse alexandrite laser, diode laser and pulsed light machines, are the most popular ones - the first option being the most widely used with excellent results.

Possible side-effects include changes in pigmentation (either dark or light areas), which may persist for months but then usually fade. Blisters and crusting occur uncommonly. These side-effects are commoner in people with dark skin or with a tan. Laser treatment is usually associated with bearable discomfort felt with each pulse, but in individuals with a low pain threshold, a topical anaesthetic cream should be considered for sensitive areas such as the upper lip, armpits and bikini line.

Multiple treatments every 2-8 months are required as hair grows in cycles and the laser is most effective on hair that is in the growing phase of the cycle. This must be considered when estimating the cost of treatment. It is not possible to predict with accuracy the number of treatments an individual will need which varies according to body site - most long lasting results with least number of sessions are achieved in the armpits, bikini line, trunk & limbs.

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