
FAQ: LASER HAIR REMOVAL

What is PROFILE?

Profile is an infrared laser that can selectively target microstructures such as hair follicles. It is very effective for lighter skin types, and because of the relatively low absorption of this light by melanin, it is the best choice when treating darker skin types. Additionally, the ability to safely treat sun-tanned skin makes this the treatment of choice for active individuals.

What treatments are available?

Waxing, shaving, and the use of depilatory creams are well-established methods for hair removal, albeit temporary. Electrolysis is the traditional tried and tested method for permanent hair removal, but is often very time-consuming and inefficient. These days, the most popular and most effective method for hair removal is the use of lasers which have been specifically designed to damage and destroy many hairs in a short time, and with little chance of complications. People are interested in laser hair removal because it involves new and efficient technology, and because its effects are permanent in over 80% of its subjects.

What is laser hair removal? How does it work?

Laser hair removal offers patients a safe, fast, and effective alternative for dealing with unwanted hair. Lasers work by emitting a specialized light that is passed through the skin and preferentially absorbed by its target, be it an unwanted blood vessel, birthmark, tattoo, or in this case, hair. The laser used in hair removal targets the melanin (color) in the hair follicle, damaging the follicle and removing the hair.

Laser hair removal is safe enough to be used on all body parts, including the face, back, underarms, bikini line, legs, and arms.

Can all skin colors be treated?

Yes all skin types I through VI can be treated. Skin Type I is very fair, always burns, never tans (usually blonde hair and blue eyes). Skin Type VI never burns (black skin, black hair).

Can tanned skin be treated?

Tanned skin can be treated safely, but always inform your physician if you have been tanning or exposed to the sun within the last three weeks and he will adjust your treatment regime accordingly to give you the safest most effective experience.

What happens during hair removal treatment?

Your physician will discuss the treatment with you and decide if you need a topical anesthetic cream. The area of your skin that is to be treated will be scanned with laser light from the PROFILE system. Treatment time will depend upon the area to be treated. A system for cooling your skin will be used to remove heat as it leaves the follicles and should ensure a comfortable treatment. However, since the sensation varies from individual to individual, a topical anesthesia can be provided. Let your physician know if you are very sensitive.

How does it work?

The PROFILE laser selectively targets your hair follicles and heats them with infra-red energy. Unlike other processes the laser beam treats many hairs at once making treatment of large areas practical. The PROFILE employs a unique computer guided scanning system that automates the treatment ensuring that your skin is rapidly and evenly treated. The computer sets the parameters and places the beam in an optimum pattern for your skin. You will have a safe, fast, effective, and gentle treatment.

What should I expect after treatment?

Some redness and slight swelling may be present in the area that has been treated, however, this should subside within a few hours. If any prolonged redness or swelling occurs then consult your physician.

Post Treat Care

Keep area clean.
Use at least SPF 15 sunscreen when outdoors.
Follow physician instructions.

Is there a risk for complications?

There is a low risk of pigmentary changes, however discuss your concerns with your physician prior to your treatment.

Can pseudofolliculitis be treated?

Yes. Pseudofolliculitis is a type of chronic acne disorder caused by ingrown coarse or curly hairs. This disorder affects darker skin types and the infrared energy, which is delivered by PROFILE, is the preferred method of treatment.

Is treatment permanent?

On average, each laser treatment will be associated with some permanent hair loss. So in most cases hair removal can only be achieved after several treatments. The number of treatments will depend on each patient's individual response to laser surgery, and the amount of hair to be removed. Remember that the goal may not be total hair removal. Many patients are happy with a reasonable degree of hair reduction. Also remember that the hair that remains is often lighter in color and thinner than the original hair prior to laser surgery. As with other treatments for unwanted hair, there is no guarantee that laser hair removal treatment will be permanent.

How many treatments will I need?

You may need to be treated about 3 to 5 times at approximately 5 to 8 week intervals. There are three phases of hair growth – anagen, catagen, and telogen. Only hairs in the active growth, anagen, can be successfully treated.

Does treatment hurt? What can I expect with the procedure?

Most patients describe laser hair removal as feeling "prickly," or like the light snap of a rubber band against the skin. Afterwards, it might feel like a bad sunburn. Each patient has his or her own level of skin sensitivity and pain threshold. Different areas on the body are also more sensitive than others.

On the day of your treatment, plan on wearing clothing that will allow easy access to the area being treated. You may not need any type of anesthesia for your treatments. Laser hair removal works best when the hair is one to two millimeters in length. No specific care is needed after the treatment.

How long will it take my skin to heal?

Normally the skin just looks red and swollen for up to 48 hours, or possibly longer. Most patients will be offered a test area before undergoing a full treatment. This gives them a great idea of how the treatment will feel, and the length of time it will look red and swollen. Occasionally, patients can develop a blistering reaction. If this happens, call your treating physician and ask for specific post-laser treatment options.

What will I look like immediately afterwards?

Generally, some redness will remain for approximately five to seven days. For some patients recovery time will be less while other patients will have prolonged redness.

How much does treatment cost?

The cost of treatment is dependent on many factors. These factors could include the size of the area needing treatment, the number of treatments necessary, and the individual fees each office charges for treatments. Some offices have package deals that include a certain number of treatments per year for a reduced cost. It's always best to ask when scheduling an appointment.

Will my insurance coverage treatment?

Unwanted hair is usually a cosmetic issue, so in most cases you should expect to pay for treatment. In the rare instances where treatment is considered medically necessary, insurance may cover the cost of treatment. It's best to speak to your doctor and your insurance company to clarify this question.