

Hair Removal Before and After Instructions for Laser Treatments

The following instructions are for laser and intense pulsed light (collectively referred to as laser) treatments for hair removal.

Prior to Treatment

- Avoid tanning bed, direct sun exposure, and sunless tanning products for 4 weeks prior to each treatment and the duration of treatments.
- Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen of at least SPF 30 containing zinc oxide or titanium dioxide daily for the duration of treatments. Our office carries two different types of medical-grade mineral sunscreen.
- Do not use medications that cause photosensitivity (such as doxycycline and minocycline) for at least 72 hours prior to each treatment.
- If you have a history of herpes (oral cold sores, genital) or shingles in the treatment area, start your antiviral medication (valacyclovir, acyclovir) as directed for 2 days prior to treatment and continue for 3 days after treatment.
- Discontinue use of glycolic and Retin-A-containing products 1 week before treatments.
- Shave the area to be treated 1 day prior to your visit. If the hair in the treatment area is very sparse, do not shave—the provider will shave that area at the time of your treatment.
- Do not pluck, wax, undergo stringing or electrolysis, use depilatory creams or bleach for 4 weeks prior to treatments.
- At the time of treatment, the area must be free of any open sores, lesions, or skin infections (e.g., active acne).

After Treatment

- Some skin redness and swelling along with a mild to moderate sunburn sensation in the treatment area are common. This typically resolves within a few hours but may last up to 3 days.
- Apply a wrapped cool compress or wrapped ice pack to the treated areas for 15 minutes every 1–2 hours as needed to reduce these symptoms. You may also apply hydrocortisone 1% over-the-counter cream two times per day on intact skin up to 3 days to decrease any skin irritation.
- Gently wash twice daily with mild soap, do not rub the skin vigorously and avoid hot water, as the skin will be fragile for several days.
- Avoid activities that can cause flushing for 24 hours after treatment or until any swelling resolves.
- Avoid any topical products that may cause irritation for 1 week following treatment.
- If blistering, crusting, or scabbing develops, call our office immediately. Apply a thin layer antibiotic ointment (such as bacitracin) to the area twice a day until the skin heals. Do not pick or attempt to remove scabs that form following your treatment, as this may incur infection or scarring.
- Any extruding singed hairs is normal and may occur for several weeks.