



## BAY AREA COSMETIC DERMATOLOGY

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### PRE & POST CARE FOR LASER HAIR REMOVAL

#### WHAT TO EXPECT

- The hairs treated with laser hair removal will begin shedding out of the follicle up to three weeks after the treatment. The hairs may look like small black dots on the skin as they sit in the hair shaft waiting to fall out. You can assist the hairs out by gently using a loofah or washcloth.
- Each treatment reduces the hair by 10%-20%, so you should expect to see a substantial amount of hair grow back after the first treatment. The hair that grows back often appears lighter and the amount of hair is less dense.
- A successful series of laser hair removal treatments reduces the amount of hair by 70%-80%. Most people should expect a series of 5-8 treatments. After a successful completion of hair laser removal, some patients will opt for “touch up” appointments when re-growth becomes a concern.
- Some patients have areas of hair growth that are hormonally driven and may need additional treatments. In these instances, laser hair removal may be used as an ongoing maintenance program to keep the unwanted hair in a manageable state.
- For some patients, areas treated may appear darker and could be post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. Due to the unique chemistry of each individual's skin, even safe and proper laser treatments may result in this type of hyperpigmentation. This type of pigmentation is not permanent, but proper care is necessary to resolve. If you notice any darkening of the treated area, please contact your provider promptly.

#### HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT

- The melanin in tanned skin can increase the risk of hyperpigmentation, hypopigmentation, or blistering. Sun protection during the series of treatments reduces post treatment risk factors. Please stay out of direct sunlight for 2 weeks prior to treatment - we will not be able to treat if you have a suntan or sunburn.
- Self-tanners should be removed prior to each treatment.
- Patients with history of hyperpigmentation and those with deeper skin tones may elect to start skin lightening regimen (2) weeks prior and throughout the series to treatment to reduce the risk. Your provider will provide detailed instructions.
- Each day of treatment, the areas for hair removal should have a close shave or the least amount of stubble to identify areas needing treatment. Time to shave prior to your appointment varies per person and area. The goal is to achieve a close shave or minimal stubble presentation for the day of laser hair removal.
- For the best results, do not wax, thread, tweeze, or bleach the hairs to be removed.
- If the area you are treating has a history of herpes such as cold sores or genital herpes, an antiviral medication should be taken before the treatment. **Your provider can prescribe the day of treatment.**

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## HOW TO CARE FOR SKIN AFTER TREATMENT

- Post treatment skin reactions vary and can include warmth, redness, bumps, and swelling around the hair follicle. Using ice packs, applying [BACD Calming Cream](#) or over-the-counter 1% hydrocortisone cream can help reduce discomfort and redness. As needed, your provider can also review options for over-the-counter pain relievers and/or anti-histamines.
- Avoid direct sunlight to the treated area. SPF 30+ should be applied to all treated areas daily.
- For the first 2-3 days after your treatment, the area may be delicate and should be treated with care. Use gentle moisturizers and cleansers.
- Avoid shaving and any active and/or medicated products including retinoids, tretinoin, glycolics, salicylic acids, lactic acids, hydroquinone products (which is the active ingredient in many of the Obagi and BACD brightening products), dapson, acne products, or precancer treatments as directed by your provider.
- Make up may be applied to the treated area directly after the treatment.

**If your skin develops anything that resembles a blister, burn, darkening of the skin, or an open wound please call the office immediately.**

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*If your provider has given you instructions deviating from the general recommendations in this document, please follow your provider's personalized instructions.*

Questions or concerns? Please securely send a direct message to your provider through BACD's online patient portal: [MyPatientVisit](#) or call the office 415-292-6350.