

Unwanted hair has been a concern for people for centuries. Originally shaving was all that was available to control it. As time has gone by waxing, creams and electrolysis have been used. None is an ideal solution. The first three need to be constantly repeated. And there are problems with shaving rashes and infections (folliculitis), chemical sensitivities and allergies. Electrolysis is slow, painful, and has additional problems at times of causing scarring.

Since 1995 **lasers** have been used to control hair. They have proved excellent at enabling the rapid clearance of hair, with the promise of permanent control. The goal has been to develop the ideal laser for the job. The **Cool Glide** machine offers the very latest development in hair removal by laser.

HOW DO LASERS WORK ON HAIR?

All hair contains some melanin (black/brown pigment) at least in the root base area, especially in the early growth phase. Laser light that is well absorbed by this pigment can be used to selectively treat hair follicles. By absorbing laser energy the temperature in the hair root is raised and the growing follicle is destroyed.

WHAT WILL ONE TREATMENT ACHIEVE?

All hairs that are actively growing in the treated area will be affected by the laser. This will cause them to stop growing and fall out usually at about two weeks.

WHY MORE THAN ONE TREATMENT?

Different areas of the body have different proportion of hairs growing at any one time. Some are in the process of stopping growing. And some are at rest. Therefore as the non-actively growing ones kick in again, more hair will appear. By keeping up regular treatments, more hair follicles will be affected. The body has its own healing mechanism and will re-establish some areas at times too. Hormone changes and time can cause new areas to grow hairs.

WILL ALL HAIR DISAPPEAR?

With repeated treatments 95-100% of coarse hair will clear. Fine, immature, vellus hairs, like in young children, tend to persist.

HOW MANY TREATMENTS WILL I NEED?

Everyone is different and it is not possible to predict. The majority of people will respond in six sessions. Lessening numbers may need up to ten to achieve the same result. Blonder, grey and red hair tend to respond more slowly, requiring usually extra sessions. The slowest is red hair.

If all you are seeking is a significant reduction in coarse hair, you might find two treatments is all you need. This will reduce hair density by half although people find this hard to tell at a glance. Usually people want a greater clearance than this.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I HAVE TREATMENTS?

Different areas of the body have different hair growth phases. Some hair such as on the

eyebrows and ears grows for 4-8 weeks, then dies. Whereas the scalp hair grows for 2-6 years. Also rest phases are different, being 6 weeks in the upper lip and 5 months on the legs. And the proportion of hair actively growing at any one time varies from site to site.

To get hairs that are actively growing some spacing of the treatment times is required. It has been shown that having set repeated treatments is more effective long term than doing it when people feel they need their next one. So sticking to a set 2 monthly plan is probably ideal. But in some areas of the body, people may prefer to get treatment when new hairs start showing and bothering them – this may be sooner than the recommended time.

IS IT PAINFUL?

Generally it is very comfortable. The skin cooling of the Cool Glide makes the skin less sensitive to heat created by the laser. It also protects the skin pigment. But some areas are more sensitive than others. Adjusting the energy of the laser (to a degree, so it will still work) and the rate of firing will help comfort. The more sensitive areas are those of the upper lip, bikini line, underarm etc. Comfort is generally felt to be better than with waxing and certainly better than electrolysis. Anaesthetic creams are not usually necessary.

WHAT PREPARATION IS REQUIRED?

- Shaving the area on the day of treatment.
- Avoid waxing for at least two weeks before treatment.
- Stop depilatory creams one day before.
- Ideally reducing tanning before the treatment will allow higher energies with quicker results

to be achieved. But it is not an absolute requirement.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS?

Common:

1. Usually some swelling and redness occurs about the hair follicles for the first hour or so (a bit like a shaving rash).

Uncommon:

2. Some skin peeling in the area a few days later. We have not seen this yet.
3. Areas about the lip, or other that have been liable to cold sore, or herpes simplex, outbreaks could break out after treatment.
4. Small blisters from burns can occur if the hair is above the skin surface at treatment time from inadequate shaving. This is rare.
5. Some change in local pigmentation very occasionally does occur. 1-2% can experience this at a month, but settling by three months. Care with energy of the laser can minimise this – it is a balance of getting effective treatment without doing harm. We have not seen this yet.

HOW DO LASERS WORK?

By energising certain gases, liquids or solids, light of different colours, specific to the material, can be produced. Reflecting the light in special chambers concentrates it.

Different colours and structures within the body will absorb different amounts of light as energy into them. These differences allow for specific treatment of various parts of the body.

For hair removal to be effective the laser beam needs to penetrate deep enough (hair follicles

occur at 1-5mm below the skin surface depending on the areas and person), with enough energy, and for enough time to cause the hair to be destroyed. By cooling the skin surface the skin pigment can be preserved.

COOL GLIDE ADVANTAGES

- Hair on skin of all colours can be treated.
- Even hair on tanned skin can be treated.
- Its long wavelength allows it to effectively reach even the deepest hair roots.
- Its high power and long pulse lengths creates the most effective beam.

PRECAUTIONS IN TREATMENT

Protection eyewear is worn by the person treated and the operator.

People who have taken Roaccutane or gold medications should wait for six months after finishing them before beginning treatment.

WHY DIFFERENCES IN HAIR GROWTH?

Genetic differences account for quite a deal of variation in hair growth and distribution between people.

Hormones account for other differences. This gives the male/female variation. But it also accounts for individual variation and variation with age. Some abnormal hormone states can cause problems and may need other approaches added.

Please talk to us about your concerns.



COOL GLIDE Laser Hair Removal and Control

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