

# Instructions for Laser Treatment of Unwanted Hair:

## **What is laser hair removal?**

Hair grows in cycles of active and dormant follicles. Laser can only affect the follicles that are in the active phase. Therefore, multiple treatment sessions are required, and the overall goal is reduction of the hair follicles. Complete hair removal is usually not possible, and laser is not effective on thin or light-colored hair such as blonde, gray or red hair. The Candela Laser is most effective on coarse and black hair on lighter skin tones. Best for Fitzpatrick scale I – III (the classification of skin color and response to UV light). A test spot will be recommended for Fitzpatrick scale IV – VI.

## **How often do I have to come in for my laser hair removal treatment?**

Laser sessions for facial hair should be performed every 4-6 weeks, and body hair every 6-8 weeks - in a consistent manner, until advised otherwise.

## **Does laser hair removal hurt?**

The laser treatment will feel like a “rubber band snap” or “heat sensation” and the degree of the discomfort is comparable to waxing. The use of anesthetic cream is optional. The cream should be applied 45 minutes prior to the treatment and covered with Saran wrap for maximal effect. Please ask for a prescription for the cream at the front desk if you would like to use it.

\*Safety considerations are important during the laser procedure. You and all personnel in the treatment suite will wear protective eyewear during the procedure to prevent damage to the eye. Additionally, due to laser fumes and protective eyewear requirements, children are not permitted in the treatment suite.\*

## **How do I prepare for my laser hair removal treatment?**

- Avoid sun exposure 2 to 3 weeks before and after treatment. TAN SKIN CANNOT BE TREATED. A tan or dark skin tone could cause a burn or discoloration (dark or light spots) of the skin after laser treatment. The use of tanning cream must also be stopped 10 days prior to treatment.
- **SUMMER WARNING! Avoid *heat* and sun exposure, even to surrounding areas. Be sure to advise your technician if treatment feels unusually hot.**
- It is important that you do NOT have more than a “stubble” growth of dark hair on the day of treatment. Do not wax, pluck, thread or bleach for about 3 weeks before the treatment. Too much hair growth will cause the energy to absorb into the shaft of the hair follicle rather than the hair bulb or root.
  - For Women: Facial hair may be trimmed with scissors if you do not wish to shave the area(s) to be treated.
  - For Men: Shave the same day of your treatment.
- Body hair should be shaved the day of treatment or up to 2 days prior to treatment. As your treatments progress, shaving times may change. The nurse will provide individualized shaving instructions to accommodate the slower hair growth.
- Certain medications are contraindicated with the use of the lasers. Accutane must be discontinued for 6 months prior to receiving a laser treatment. If you are taking an anti-biotic, check with the office for specific instructions that pertain to your specific medication.

## **What should I expect after treatment? Are there any restrictions?**

- Immediately after treatment, there may be redness and swelling of the treated site, which may last up to 1-3 days. The treated area will feel like sunburn for a few hours after treatment. It is normal to feel some itching of the treated area for a few days after treatment since laser can cause skin dryness. Should the itching persist for more than 3 days, call the office. If you experience this, avoid scratching the area and apply moisturizing cream that is free of perfume such as Aquaphor or Vaseline.
- Make-up may be used a few hours after the treatment.

- Avoid sun exposure after your treatment to reduce the chance of skin discoloration. Use sunscreen (SPF 35 or greater) when exposed to direct sun light.
- **SUMMER WARNING! Avoid *heat* and sun exposure, even to surrounding areas. The energy of the laser is not just absorbed by the intended target, it is also absorbed by the surrounding tissue. Be sure to advise your technician if treatment feels unusually hot.**
- It takes anywhere from one to two weeks after treatment for the burnt hairs to fall off. Shedding of the treated hair may appear as hair growth during this time. You can remove the hair by scrubbing the area with a wet cloth or Loofa sponge. Also, please keep in mind that a first-time treated area, the hair may not fall out completely as multiple treatments are needed.
- Some individuals may develop a rash or skin “break out” after the laser treatment. If this occurs, please use over-the-counter hydrocortisone cream and notify us if it does not resolve.
- Laser Hair Removal is not approved while pregnant. Safety has not been tested.
- Laser Hair Removal is not approved while nursing. Cryogen has not been tested and is not FDA approved for nursing mothers; however, the option is available to receive treatment with the recommendation that the patient discard the breast milk produced during the first 24 hours after treatment. It is advisable to discuss treatment recommendations with your pediatrician.

### **What if I experience any side effects or some hairs are missed?**

- Call the office at (818) 500-0823 with any questions or concerns that you may have after the treatment. It is very important that you notify us if there are any signs of skin blistering or discoloration, so we can prescribe appropriate medication and modify your future treatments.
- If you received a follow-up, full area treatment and a “patch” of missed hair is still present after all other hair has shed, you may call our office for a possible 5 minute “touch up” treatment. A “touch up” treatment is not available on “touch up” treatments and must be performed within 2 weeks after original treatment.

*When you are scheduling your appointments, please indicate the areas that you would like to have treated in order to allow for the appropriate amount time.*

**If you have any further questions or concerns, please call our office at (818) 500-0823.**