Laser Hair Removal Facts Guide

Be informed ...
What is Laser Hair Removal?

Unlike traditional methods of hair removal, laser destroys the root of the hair follicle. This destroys unwanted hair and prevents future growth. Unlike beauty grade machinery which only guarantees hair reduction, medical-grade technology ensures targeted results to provide a permanent solution.

Laser is attracted to melanin (the pigment) within the hair and follicle. The laser is converted into heat energy that destroys the stem cell within the follicle and prevents future growth.

All laser treatments at Australian Laser & Skin Clinics provide a safe and comfortable experience.
What is the difference between medical & beauty grade machines?

A medical-grade laser offers permanent hair removal, not hair reduction. In order to provide such results for a variety of skin types and colours, Australian Laser & Skin Clinics offer two types of technology:

Alexandrite lasers are most suitable for fair to medium toned complexions with medium to course dark hair.

Diode lasers offer the fastest treatment time and can be suitable for medium to darker toned complexions with fine to coarse darker hair.

Both technologies heat the hair follicle to 70 degrees cutting off blood supply and nutrients to the hair. This ensures permanent removal. Beauty grade machines only warm the follicle to 40 degrees, temporarily damaging the hair. This only creates hair reduction. As the hairs slowly become lighter in colour and thickness, they can no longer respond to treatment. Skin Clinics provide a safe and comfortable
Is Laser and IPL Hair Removal the same?

IPL or Intense Pulsed Light hair removal is a cheaper and often beauty grade treatment that is not as effective as laser.

Unlike a laser which emits a coherent or direct beam at a consistent wavelength, IPL releases scattered light over various wavelengths that deliver less precision and less results. In the long term, more treatments are required. Only a reduction in hair growth, not permanent removal is created. With more treatments required, the hairs grow back finer and lighter as sessions progress. As this occurs, the light no longer successfully attracts to pigment in the hair.

Medical-grade laser is a significantly more expensive technology than IPL and many operators choose to work with cheaper and inferior machinery.

Australian Laser & Skin Clinics only uses medical-grade alexandrite and diode laser technology for permanent hair removal.
What qualifications must my clinician hold?

Unfortunately there are no national laser regulations in Australia, each state governs its own jurisdiction. Whilst in Western Australia, a laser may only be operated under direct guidance of a doctor, in Victoria, anyone with any background can legally own and operate a medical grade laser.

Although Laser Safety Certification is required in some states, it is voluntary in Victoria. Due to the cost of such qualification and the practical hours to pass required, most operators cut costs and simply train staff on-the-job. Such operators possess no formal laser certification and worse still, possess no formal qualifications in skin or clinical aesthetics.

All Australian Laser & Skin practitioners are laser safety certified and possess a minimum diploma in skin therapy. All clinicians obtain paramedical post-graduate training and each clinic is also staffed by a registered cosmetic nurse under the guidance of a cosmetic physician.

Ask the Question:
Does your Laser Operators have Laser Safety Certificates?
How often should I really be receiving treatments?

Hair growth occurs in three distinct biological cycles. These cannot be sped up or slowed down to accelerate treatment results. In order to target hair during its growth cycle, treatments on the body should be performed around every 8 weeks.

Whilst many operators perform treatment at monthly intervals, there must be hair within the follicle in order for the laser to be attracted to the hair’s pigment. Lasering an empty hair follicle provides no result and cannot accelerate hair removal. Consumers who receive treatment every four weeks on the body end up spending more money and require more sessions.

2-3 weeks after receiving a laser hair removal treatment, the area will experience a “fall-out” period. This is where the hair is released from the follicle before re-growth occurs around 2 weeks later.

As not all hairs are in the same growth stage at the same time. A minimum of 6 treatments will ensure that all hairs are treated at the correct stage to provide 90% permanent hair removal. Whilst some people may experience results with less treatment, hormonal imbalances, genetic factors and certain medications may require further treatment or maintenance.

Due to the different type of hair and varying hormonal influences, facial hair is the only region that should be targeted at closer intervals, roughly every 4 weeks.
Why do I need a full consultation if I have had treatment somewhere else before?

With so many machines and technologies available on the market, a full consultation with a certified practitioner is required. This establishes exactly what type of technology has been used to treat the area before; what results were achieved; and what treatment programme should be implemented to achieve the desired results. Which laser technology to use; how many treatments will roughly be required; and how much the process will cost prior to treatment can then be determined.

Despite the many rumours often claimed by some laser technicians, laser cannot work on blonde, light red, white or grey hair. Laser also cannot be performed on:

- Skin that has had recent sun exposure
- Areas that have been recently waxed, plucked or bleached
- Areas that are tanned from the sun or self-tanning products & spray tans
- Dark to very dark skin tones
Am I being charged for the treatment area or just for treatment time?

Always ensure that any quotes and the area being treated are not being charged by the minute. “Stop Watch” clinics can be a lot like internet plans. Once the allowance is exceeded, additional pricing kicks in creating unexpected and unnecessary costs.

The treatment area should always be professionally and completely treated during each session with no time constraints. Treatment programmes ensure set pricing, correct treatment and no surprises.

The Australian Laser & Skin Clinics ensure that adequate time is allocated for each treatment session and that the entire area is methodically, professionally and suitably treated.

**Avoid Stop Watch treatment. You will most likely pay more in the end and the treatment will be rushed.**
Are results the same for everyone?

Different skin and hair colour affects how laser works. Dark hair naturally contains a higher amount of melanin (pigment) to attract laser energy and is the most ideal colour to treat. Fair coloured hair is harder to treat as it contains far less melanin. No laser can remove blonde, light red, grey or white hair - there is no pigment to attract the laser.

Laser is most suitable for fair to olive complexions with dark hair growth. As laser does not decipher between the dark pigment in hair or on the skin, dark to very dark skin tones are not suitable for treatment.

Individual hair growth cycles, hormones, medications, skin and hair colour all affect which type of laser is used, how many treatments will be required and at what intervals. An average of 90% permanent hair removal is achieved after just six treatments for suitable candidates.
What protocols have been implemented to ensure treatment hygiene?

Medical grade laser hair removal should only be performed in a hygienic, clean and clinical environment. The clinician must always be wearing gloves and a new gauge tip affixed to the laser for each session or new area.

Disposable bedding sheets, disinfected protective goggles and single use treatment consumables are all signs of hospital grade standards to ensure the upmost of hygiene, safety and comfort.

Treatment rooms should be spacious, contain a sink and a comfortable treatment bed. The floor should never be carpeted and there should be no mirrors on the wall.

Australian Laser & Skin Clinics operate out of medical practices and adhere to the strictest of health, safety and hygiene practices.
When is the best time to start treatment?

Whilst a laser hair removal programme may be started at any time, the cooler months enable reduced sun exposure to treatment areas such as legs, arms and face. No matter what time of the year sessions commence, a broadspectrum sunscreen must be worn everyday on the treatment area and direct sun exposure avoided.

As silly as it sounds, the treatment area will need to be closely shaved within 24 hours prior to treatment. This enables the laser energy to be actively absorbed into the follicle rather than working on the skin’s surface. The hair will be released from the follicle 2-3 weeks after treatment creating a “fall out” period. To maximise hair growth cycles and cumulative results, subsequent treatments should be performed around 8 week intervals for body areas.
Laser Hair Removal Checklist

The questions to ask when selecting a reputable clinic

- What hair removal technologies are offered? laser, IPL or more beautician-based services such as waxing?
- Is the laser machine a class 4, FDA and TGA approved medical grade device?
- What is the brand of the laser machine being used?
- What relevant industry qualifications do treatment clinicians hold? Are they laser safety certified? Do they have qualifications in beauty therapy, dermal therapies or cosmetic nursing?
- At what intervals should laser hair removal treatments for the body be performed?
- Do you offer a skin assessment and consultation prior to treatment?
- Do you charge laser sessions by the minute or until the treated area has been successfully completed?
- My friend tried laser once and she was disappointed with the results? How can you determine if it will work for me?
- Is your business a medical laser clinic or do you operate out of a beauty salon, hairdressers or private home?
- Can I receive treatment year-round or are there optimum seasons I should start my sessions in?

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