

Electrolysis vs. Laser Comparison Chart

ELECTROLYSIS	TOPIC	LASER
Yes, the heat destroys the hair follicle.	Is it permanent?	The laser shrinks the hair follicle. The FDA says that laser is a " <i>reduction in the number of hairs re-growing after a treatment regime</i> ".
Pain tolerance varies individually. There is a sensation associated with the electrolysis procedure, which one might interpret as a slight warming effect. There are topicals available for relief.	Does it hurt?	The sensation has been described as a rubber band being snapped or a pin prick.
Safe and effective treatment for ALL hairs - dark, blond, white and red and ALL skin types, light and dark; suntan history is not important.	Medical History	Client's medical and suntan history required; treatment for individuals with dark hair and light skin (not blond, gray or red hair or dark skin).
Hairs not at the anagen stage will grow back and others may have been cycled out and not evident with prior electrolysis.	Re-growth	Hairs not at the anagen stage will grow back. Some hairs will grow back softer, finer and lighter in color. Some hairs are "stubborn" and laser may not be the best choice to remove these hairs.
Depending on skin type and sensitivity, some redness/swelling may occur (which will subside within an hour or two) and occasionally some scabbing may occur.	Appearance After Treatment	Redness like a sunburn, and possible swelling. Skin may blister if laser is performed on newly suntanned skin.
The first treatment is after a 15 minute consultation.	How Soon Does Treatment Actually Start?	First visit - consultation; the Medical Director must sign off on the medical history prior to starting treatment. Second visit - a test spot is treated; look for reactions

		Third visit - Full treatment to the desired body part
Every case is different. One cannot know how many times it will take until your hairs are gone. A schedule is set up at the consultation depending on the needs of each client, which will determine the length and frequency of electrolysis treatments.	Frequency	Every case is different. Typically, you would have one visit every 4-6 weeks with an average of 6-8 total treatments to the desired body part. Some individuals may need to have a touch ups periodically after their treatment regime.
Depends on the area to be treated. Some examples... upper lip or chin — 15-30 minutes; body areas — 45-60 minutes.	Length of Each Treatment	This varies on the desired body part being worked upon. Some examples... upper lip or chin — 10 minutes; full legs — 90 minutes; underarms or bikini — 20 minutes.
You will see a slowing of hair growth. Typically after the 6th treatment, one will see a marked reduction.	Are the Results Immediate?	Not seen right away. The hairs will fall out from 3-4 weeks after the treatment. Typically after the 4th treatment, one will see a marked reduction.

Not routinely covered by insurance. Electrolysis is considered very cost effective when compared to other Temporary hair removal methods, such as laser. A schedule is set up at the consultation depending on the needs of each client, which will determine the length and frequency of electrolysis treatments. Commitment and consistency are key elements for successful hair removal.

Cost

Not routinely covered by insurance
Expect 6 to 8 treatments scheduled 4 to 6 week's apart (approx) to achieve reduction. Consultation will determine frequency and cost. Consistency is key for this process.

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TEMPORARY HAIR REMOVAL METHODS

Shaving

Shaving cuts the hair off at the surface of the skin leaving a smooth finish but hair quickly grows back. As the hair grows back, it will feel bristly and stubbly and often gives a shadowed, grey appearance to the skin in areas of thick growth. Regrowth can happen in as little as a few hours but will definitely be visible within days. You may suffer small nicks and cuts, razor burn and/or ingrown hairs.

Depilatory Creams

Depilatories are used to dissolve the hair at skin's surface. They provide slower regrowth and a less stubbly effect than shaving but they do involve a bit of waiting, covered in messy cream, and they also smell quite strongly of chemicals. Depilatories are common, but some consumers find that the caustic ingredients cause skin irritation or even chemical burns. Effect lasts a short time - anywhere from a few hours to several days.

Waxing and Sugaring

Waxing usually gives quite a few days and often weeks without regrowth so it is one of the best temporary hair removal methods from that point of view. There are several types of wax treatment such as cold wax strips, hot wax or sugar waxing (similar to waxing but with a sticky paste rather than wax). The treatment basically consists of having the hair adhere to the stickiness of the wax so that several hairs can be pulled out at once. Needless to say most people find this painful to say the least.

Plucking/Tweezing

Using tweezers to pluck out individual hairs is a great method for dealing with eyebrows or for getting rid of a few stray hairs which might crop up anywhere where you don't want them. Plucking with tweezers (or tweezing, as it is sometimes called) does hurt (as does any method which involves pulling the hair from the skin) but there are ways of lessening that if you are dealing with a larger area such as your brows.

Epilators

Epilators are small electrical devices which usually consist of spinning disks which trap hair and pull it out from the roots. Some find this method uncomfortable, especially on sensitive areas, and the hair must be grown long enough for tweezers to grasp. Hair grows back within 2 to 4 weeks but regrowth is finer than with shaving and is similar to waxing.

Threading

Threading is a process which consists of pulling unwanted hairs from the skin by entwining them in twists of cotton thread and lifting the hair out from the follicles. Threading is often used for facial hair removal as it is suitable for delicate skin. It is more effective and less painful than tweezing and is therefore often used in place of plucking for eyebrows. Side effects can include folliculitis, a bacterial infection in the hair follicles, skin reddening or puffiness, and changes in skin pigment.

Friction Methods

Removing hair by means of a skin hair friction mitt or other rough substance such as pumice stone is not that common but it can be effective for some. The unwanted hair is gently rubbed off at the skin surface and it takes with it any roughness from the surface of the skin too which has the advantage of removing dull, dry, rough and flaky skin. This method is best for very fine hair; otherwise you have to rub too hard to remove hair and this will irritate your skin. Effect lasts a short time - anywhere from a few hours to several days.

Vaniqa

Vaniqa is a brand name prescription cream applied to the skin for the reduction of unwanted facial hair in women ages 12 and older. This medication is not a depilatory, but rather appears to retard hair growth to improve the condition and the appearance of some consumers. You will likely need to continue using a hair removal method (e.g., shaving, plucking) in conjunction with Vaniqa. It will usually take 2 months of treatment before you see if it works or not. For unknown reasons, Vaniqa does not work for everyone. If you stop taking Vaniqa, your hair will come back to previous levels within 2 months after stopping. Effectiveness: About 58% of women who tried Vaniqa in clinical trials had improvement. The other 42% had no improvement.

HAIR GROWTH

Anagen (the growing phase)

The anagen phase of a new hair starts at the moment it begins to grow. At that time there is very active growth in the hair bulb. During this phase the hair grows about 1 cm every 28 days. The anagen phase in the scalp may last 2 to 6 years, whereas in other areas of the body and face it only lasts 2 to 3 months.

Catagen (the intermediate phase)

At the end of the Anagen phase the hairs enter into a Catagen phase which lasts about 1 to 2 weeks. During the Catagen phase the hair follicle shrinks to about 1/6 of the normal length. The lower part is destroyed and the dermal papilla breaks away to rest below.

Telogen (the shedding phase)

The Telogen phase follows the Catagen phase and normally lasts about 5 to 6 weeks. During this time the hair does not grow but stays attached to the follicle while the dermal papilla stays in a resting phase below. Approximately 10- to 15 percent of all hairs are in this phase at any one time.

At the end of the Telogen phase the hair follicle re-enters the Anagen phase. The dermal papilla and the base of the follicle join together again and a new hair begins to form. If the old hair has not already been shed the new hair pushes the old one out and the growth cycle starts all over again.