

# Laser Hair Treatment: Fact vs. Fiction

Excess Hair Reduction is about More than Convenience

**Linda Simonian** is highly regarded for the depth of her knowledge on a broad variety of skin-care lasers. A former emergency room nurse for 24 years, she holds a Masters of Science degree in nursing. Simonian has worked exclusively with lasers for years and is considered an unusually skilled technician in their various applications. She is a family nurse practitioner working under the medical direction of Dr. Lad Rubaum, and is known for investing many months of research into new lasers and self-testing them before using them on her patients.

**Q:** Is there such thing as permanent hair removal with lasers?

**A:** No, and you should be leery of any clinic that promises otherwise. Many things affect hair growth, such as hormones and medical conditions. There are times when a patient who's achieved significant hair reduction suddenly sees re-growth of the hair and thinks it's because the laser didn't work, when actually hormone fluctuations or some other medical factor is causing it. Generally, however, our goal is to attempt to achieve an 80 percent

reduction or more in hair growth with proper laser treatments.

**Q:** What are the benefits of hair removal?

**A:** For women, it's because they dread and hate the embarrassment of having to shave sometimes twice a day, even on their faces, because of unsightly heavy, dark hair. Unsightliness is a factor for men and women, and there is also the factor of ingrown hairs, which look like rashes or pimples. Excess hair can be something more than a nuisance. I've seen cases where people have four hairs coming out of one follicle.

**Q:** What are the most common areas people want treated, and does it work for people of all hair colors?

**A:** Women most often want treatments around their lips and their chins, and then next come the bikini area, the underarms and the legs. For men, it's mostly the back, chest or abdomen, then the face and neck. Laser always wants a target, and that target is the color of the hair, so laser won't work on blonde, gray or red hair.

**Q:** What common misconceptions do people have about laser hair removal?

**A:** Many people think it's painful. It might be in rare cases, depending on the type of laser and the laser technician's experience. I use a laser that has a cooling mechanism so patients don't feel much heat. It requires zero recovery time and is perfectly comfortable for patients in the vast majority of cases. Another misconception is that significant hair reduction can be accomplished in a set amount of treatments. That is not true. The laser is only effective in the first stage of hair growth, and there are three stages of hair growth that change every four to six weeks. It is primarily why the number of treatments needed varies with the individual.

**Q:** You have said that laser hair removal can dramatically improve patient's lives. Why is that?

**A:** I performed laser hair removal on a woman once who was in her late 50s, and after the first treatment, she started crying because she was so happy to finally be doing something about the hair on her upper lip. For virtually all her adult life it had been an embarrassing thing for her because she could never quite make it not visible, no matter what she did. You might



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be surprised how many women have that kind of problem. It's very gratifying to be able to help them eliminate that stress and have happier, and ultimately healthier, lives.