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medical dermatology update

Questions and Answers

Q: Can Rogaine increase hair growth for brows?

A: Rogaine is FDA-approved for treatment of male pattern hair loss and female androgenic alopecia. However, it may be useful in stimulating hair growth in some individuals with non-scarring eyebrow loss.

Q: Why does hyperpigmentation occur after waxing and what's the best way to avoid it?

A: Hyperpigmentation following waxing generally occurs in individuals with darker-complected skin. It is a result of irritation and inflammation following waxing. In many instances, it is difficult to completely avoid low-grade irritation following waxing. Therefore, those individuals predisposed to post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation should be advised to consider laser hair removal instead.

Q: I hear a lot about it, but do you think Vaniqa works?

A: The short answer is yes. Vaniqa is the brand name for eflornithine hydrochloride cream, 13.9-percent. It is effective in decreasing facial hair growth in some women. It is also useful in decreasing

hair growth in individuals with *pseudofolliculitis barbae* or shaving bumps. It is particularly helpful when combined with a retinoid. Vaniqa

The use of a non-lipid cleanser prior to shaving, along with a soothing shaving gel, helps prevent razor burn.

does take up to two months to work, so patients should continue their current method of hair removal during this period. Moreover, the cream is an inhibitor, not a depilatory and, therefore requires continued, twice-daily usage to maintain its effectiveness.

Q: Why is it that some women grow chin hairs?

A: Chin hairs are often seen in postmenopausal women. They can also occur in individuals with polycystic ovarian disease. The latter condition results from a hormonal irregularity. Affected women also often have menstrual irregularities and a propensity for acne.

Q: If ingrown hairs are a major problem, what hair removal method is best to deal with it?



A: Laser hair removal is the best option for individuals prone to ingrown hairs. Shaving with a razor specifically designed for those with a propensity for ingrown hairs is recommended for those who do not want to consider laser hair removal. Such razors are designed to provide a less-close shave.

Q: When removing hair on clients with black skin, are there any precautions? What should you avoid and/or keep in mind?

A: Darker-complected individuals are predisposed to post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. They also may be more likely to develop keloidal scarring. When removing hair from these clients, it is important to minimize irritation. It is also important to make sure they are not using Retin-A, Differin, Tazorac or any over-the-counter retinol creams because these may

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Laser hair removal is the best bet for clients who suffer from ingrown hairs. But, specially designed razors that provide a less-close shave should ward off those pesky ingrowns.

increase the possibility of irritation or a burn in those predisposed to hyperpigmentation.

Q: Why does razor burn occur and what can be done to avoid and eliminate it?

A: Razor burn occurs because of friction between the razor and skin. The use of a non-lipid cleanser prior to shaving, along with a soothing shaving gel, is often helpful. It is also advisable to use a new razor and apply a mild anti-inflammatory cream, such as hydrocortisone, after shaving.

Q: I'm not sure about this, but will laser hair removal damage the skin areas being treated?

A: Laser hair removal using the correct laser for one's skin type and hair, and the correct laser parameters should not cause damage to the skin. However, choosing the wrong laser or laser parameters, or performing laser on someone with a recent tan, can lead to skin damage, hyperpigmentation and even scarring.

Q: In your opinion, is it possible to actually increase hair growth with a laser?

A: In rare instances, it is possible to increase hair growth following laser hair removal. This occurs more commonly in individuals with darker-complected skin types. While it may be possible to treat this paradoxical reaction with further laser treatment or using a different laser, in some instances, this increased hair growth does not respond to further laser therapy. ■

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