

## WHAT IS IPL AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

IPL is short for Intense Pulsed Light. The pulsed light is administered in very specific short wavelengths to reach the hair follicles in the skin, and no further into the body. The IPL is attracted to darkness of the hair and heats it up to damage the follicle.

The hair follicles that are in their growing phase, which is about 20% of the hairs at any one time, will be permanently destroyed in each treatment.

The other 80% of hairs that are in their resting phase will be weakened during each treatment, except hairs that are too light in colour – IPL will have no effect on light, red or grey hairs.

2 weeks after the IPL treatment most of the hairs should fall out and you will experience a few weeks of being almost hairfree.

(If you are not satisfied with the amount of hairs that have fallen out after 2 weeks we can repeat the treatment, or spot treat, between 2 – 3 weeks after that session at 50% discount)

After a few weeks the hairs will start growing back (except the ones that were permanently destroyed in the previous sessions) When all of these new hairs have grown back in (between 5 – 10 weeks depending on the area of treatment), we repeat the treatment again.

Generally 5 – 9 treatments is required to get maximum results from your IPL sessions. Some people may be satisfied with the level of hair reduction after as little as 2 treatments, others may want to achieve maximum results.

Please note – it is impossible to achieve 100% permanent hair removal. 80% is generally expected, the hairs that remain are usually too light or fluffy for the IPL to treat any further. The remaining hairs usually continue to grow to their original length

While the destroyed hair follicles will mostly remain dormant forever, hormones and aging can cause some of the hairs to regrow over time. After the initial treatment program it is advised to have 1 or 2 maintenance IPL sessions a year to maintain your results.

## What does a treatment session involve?

We mark out the area of treatment and assess the hair growth and condition of the skin. We can't treat over irritated or damaged skin, or over tattoos (they will burn immediately). I trim any hairs that are still visible. For the 1<sup>st</sup> session I perform a patch test to determine the settings I will use for your skin colour and hair type.

We both wear protective glasses as the light emitted, while completely safe, it is very bright

After applying a cooling gel the handpiece is pressed firmly against the skin and flashed. You will feel a hot flick against the skin. This should not be painful - expected discomfort should be between 1- 5 out of 10. Some areas are more delicate, such as over bones or where there is greater concentrations of hairs. I may use ice on certain areas (ie top lip, Brazilian) to counteract expected spikes in your tolerance to the flash

The treatment itself is generally very quick and easy, this initial consultation is the most lengthy part of the program! An underarm takes 15 minutes, a top lip 5 minutes, female Brazilian 30 minutes. Legs and larger body areas such as the back take the most time, up to an hour.

I work methodically over the treatment area applying 1 flash every 2 – 3 seconds. The handpiece treats multiple hairs in each flash.

The area will likely feel a mild tingle immediately after the flash. When the treatment is finished the skin may be slightly red, with dots around the follicles that may be slightly raised. Some freckles may look slightly darker

There is no downtime after treatment, you can continue on with your day but sunscreen must be applied if the area will be exposed to sunlight for at least 2 weeks after treatment

## Things to be aware of:

The treatment affects every client differently. Skin colour, hair colour and thickness, hormonal changes can all affect how the treatment will work for each client. For instance, a dark skinned client with lighter hairs will need more sessions during their program than someone who has light skin and dark hairs.

While we expect up to 80% hair reduction over 5 – 9 sessions, an exact result and program length cannot be predicted and no guaranty is given as to your personal results.

In some rare cases, IPL provides very little results usually due to hormonal factors. If there is no improvement after 3 sessions we will recommend to discontinue treatment. IPL may still be effective on a different area of your body.

**Expected Side effects** after treatment include mild redness, mild swelling around the follicles, mild tingling, mild sensitivity. This can last from 30 minutes up to 24 hrs

Some freckles and excess pigment can appear darker (sometimes black) for 2-4 weeks after treatment. Then they may lighten or disappear completely

Also common is hives, it is fine to take an antihistamine tablet before or after treatment

**Rare side effects** include long term changes in normal skin colour. Darker skins may appear lighter, this may take months to return to normal. Unprotected Sun exposure can cause semi permanent darkening or reddening of the treated area

As this treatment causes heat it is always a rare possibility that a burn may occur. I am constantly monitoring for hot spots and have measures in place to quickly stop a potential burn and minimise any complications. It is very unlikely that you will experience complications from a burn however it is possibility.

A very rare side effect, usually limited to those with hormonal disorders such as Polycystic ovary Syndrome, is the possibility of Paradoxical hair growth (new hair that starts growing around the treatment site)

## How to Prepare the area for each session:

- Please stop shaving or trimming a few days before treatment so I can see how many hairs are present and how they are responding to treatment
- No unprotected sun exposure or fake tan application for 2 weeks prior to treatment. We will have to turn down the intensity of the treatment and results will be lessened
- Do not take Anti Inflammatory Medications on the day of treatment (Ibuprofen, naproxen) these can make your skin more sensitive to the IPL
- Do not apply vitamin A (retinol) products to the area 2 days prior to treatment.

## HOME CARE

- Treat the skin as if it is slightly delicate for 24 hours – ie no harsh or antiaging products, no super hot baths or showers, no exfoliating or shaving.
- Apply sunscreen to the area (if exposed to the sun) for at least 2 weeks. It is recommended to apply sunscreen to any exposed areas every day, long term.
- If the skin feels burnt (very intense tingle/itch/ burn sensation that gets worse rather than subsiding) apply an ice or cool pack to the area immediately until the burning sensation subsides, let me know if you experience any burning. Most complications and pain of a burn can be avoided completely by cooling the area as quickly as possible.
- The hairs will continue to grow for approximately 2 weeks before they start to shed. You can continue to shave as often as you like from 24hrs after treatment. Do not wax or pull the hairs out for the duration of the series of treatments
- Exfoliate the area from 10days after treatment to help hairs shed
- The next treatment can be performed when all the new hairs have grown back. It is better to wait longer rather than come in too soon for the next treatment.