

HAIR REDUCTION WITH BBL

BBL (broadband light) is very popular because it can destroy many hairs in a short time, with little chance of complications. It's also faster and less painful than many alternatives. It is safe to be used anywhere on the body, including the face. BBL is not suitable for darker skin types as it is more likely to cause burns and changes in skin pigment.

How is this different from laser hair removal?

Both BBL and laser use high-energy light to target skin structures such as hair follicles. Laser uses light of a single wavelength, whereas BBL uses light with a range of wavelengths. The end result is similar – light energy gets converted into heat and destroys the hair follicle target. Early versions of IPL were often inferior to laser but the new generation BBL can achieve similar results with the advantage of being faster and less painful.

What treatments are available?

Waxing, shaving, and the use of depilatory creams are well-established methods for hair removal, although temporary. Electrolysis is the traditional tried and tested method for permanent hair removal, but is often very time-consuming and inefficient. These days, the most popular effective method of hair removal is the use of lasers or BBL. They have generated interest because they involve new and efficient technology, and because they can consistently produce long term and possibly **permanent hair reduction**.

Can all skin colours be treated?

BBL works best for fairer skin types. Darker skin types are better suited to laser hair removal as BBL may cause burning and lead to pigmentary changes in the skin.

Can tanned skin be treated?

Patients undergoing BBL should avoid tanning for at least 3-4 weeks prior to, and between treatments. Paler skin is less likely to burn or suffer pigment changes after treatment.

What happens during hair removal treatment?

The area of your skin to be treated will be scanned with BBL. Treatment time will depend on the area being treated. A system for cooling your skin will be used to remove heat as it leaves the follicles, so your treatment is as comfortable as possible. The sensation varies from individual to individual. Let your practitioner know if you are very sensitive. Protective eyewear is required during treatment as the reflected light can be very bright.

What should I expect after treatment?

Some redness and slight swelling may be present in the area that has been treated, but this should subside within a few hours. If any prolonged redness or swelling occurs, please consult your Practitioner. Keep the area clean; use at least SPF 50+ sunscreen when outdoors; and follow your practitioner's instructions.

Is treatment permanent?

On average, each BBL treatment will be associated with some permanent hair loss. So in most cases hair removal can only be achieved after several treatments. The number of treatments will depend on each patient's individual response to BBL therapy, and the amount of hair to be removed. Remember that the goal may not be total hair removal. Many patients are happy with a reasonable degree of hair reduction. As with other treatments for unwanted hair, there is no guarantee that BBL hair removal treatment will be permanent.

How many treatments will I need?

You may need to be treated at least 6 times, at approximately 6-8 week intervals. There are three phases of hair growth – anagen, catagen, and telogen. Only hairs in the active growth or anagen phase can be successfully treated. Usually only 20% of the hair is in anagen phase, which is why several serial treatments are necessary to ultimately target 100% of the hair follicles.

Does treatment hurt? What can I expect from the procedure?

Most patients describe BBL hair removal as feeling 'prickly', or like the light snap of a rubber band against the skin. Afterwards, it might feel like sunburn –each patient has his or her own level of skin sensitivity and pain threshold. Different areas on the body are also more sensitive than others.

On the day of your treatment, plan to wear clothing that will allow easy access to the area being treated. BBL hair removal works best on hair that's 1-2 millimetres in length. Two to three days prior to treatment either shave or use a depilatory cream on the area to be treated.

How long will it take my skin to heal?

Normally the skin just looks red and swollen for up to 48 hours, or possibly longer. Some patients will be offered to have a small area tested before undergoing a full treatment. This gives them an idea of how the treatment will feel, and the length of time it will take to obtain the desired result.

Occasionally, patients can develop a blistering reaction. If this happens, call the clinic and speak to one of our dermatology nurses.

What will I look like immediately afterwards?

Generally, some redness may remain for approximately 5-7 days. For some patients recovery time will be even shorter, while other patients will have prolonged redness.

What are the unwanted side effects of BBL hair removal?

Side effects are uncommon with newer generation of BBL devices.

However, the following may occur:

- Burns to the skin leading to significant scabbing.
- Alteration in pigment – darker or lighter.
- Darker-skinned individuals or those with recent tanning are at greater risk of developing both increased and decreased pigment.
- The alteration in pigment may either be temporary, or rarely, permanent.
- Scarring and indentations – usually as a result of burns (extremely rare).

Is Laser hair removal suitable for everyone?

In certain circumstances we may not treat:

- Pregnant or breast-feeding women.
- Children under the age of 18 without parental consent.
- Any area where current significant skin disease or infections such as cold sores are present.
- Any area where skin cancers are or have been present.
- Any area where there is a history of keloid scarring (special precaution in high risk areas).
- Any area where there is a history of light sensitivity including connective tissue disorders, lupus, or porphyria.
- Patients on medication that causes sensitivity to light.
- Any emotional, mental or medical condition that may result in unrealistic expectations of the results of treatment.