

Caring for your skin after laser treatment

Dr Saqib Bashir

Hair reduction laser

Now that you have had your laser treatment you need to look after your skin to help it to heal well and be in good condition for any further treatment. Almost all patients have a smooth and rapid recovery without any discomfort.

Immediate effects

Immediately after the laser treatment, redness may be seen at the treatment site. Sometimes, little tiny swollen bumps can be seen where the hair roots have been treated. These areas of redness tend to settle within a day or so after the laser treatment. If Dr Bashir has prescribed a steroid cream to be used after the laser treatment, apply this to the treated area on the evening of treatment and again on the morning afterwards. If no steroid has been prescribed, a simple moisturiser should suffice.

In the days following treatment, there may be some fine scaling or peeling of skin - simply treat this area with a moisturiser.

You may find that the hair in the treated area has been vaporised, however it is common to find burnt out hair remnants. This does not mean that the treatment has not worked: these burnt hairs tend to fall out in a little while.

The hair may take several weeks to regrow in most cases, but it is still important to have your next treatment if Dr Bashir has scheduled one for you. Rarely, the laser can stimulate growth early in the course of treatment, however this will settle as treatment continues.

Complications

Most patients do not experience any complications other than redness, mild swelling or some scaling of skin in the treatment site. There may be some lighting or darkening of skin colour, which is usually temporary. Rarely, a fluid filled blister may form - this can be pierced.

Infections are rare after this type of laser treatment however if the skin is painful or weeping or a cold sore is developing please notify Dr Bashir.

Skin care

Moisturise the skin regularly with a light moisturiser, avoiding products that contain anti-ageing acids such as glycolic, salicylic or lactic acid. Do not use scrubs, toners or peeling agents unless prescribed by Dr Bashir. You may use make up 48 hours after treatment on non-blistered skin.

During the day you should use a sunscreen and reduce direct sun exposure. You must not seek a suntan and you must not be tanned before your next treatment.

Contact Details

If you have any questions or concerns, you can speak to the nurses at the BMI Sloane Hospital (020 8466 4000) or contact Dr Bashir's secretary (020 3299 4238). Although seldom necessary, emergency advice is always available via NHS Direct or your GP.