

# 10 THINGS

YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

## LASER HAIR REMOVAL

The Smart Patient's™ guide from

DR. ROBERTUS

Laser & Cosmetic Clinic

“If You Dream It, We Can Help You Achieve It.”

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# Introduction

Managing unwanted body hair can be a nuisance. There are many hair removal options available today and they range from shaving to laser hair removal. The latter is a very popular method mostly because it is effective and long-lasting. So while laser hair removal may seem like one of the most expensive hair removal procedures, keep reading to find out how it can actually save you money in the long run.

Let's shed some light on laser hair removal by answering the top ten questions asked by our patients. Before we begin, here is a brief introduction to this guide:

**The Smart Patient's™ Guide** series is an initiative of Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic to help patients navigate the high seas of cosmetic medicine. The purpose of the Guide is to explain the most common questions about this aspects of the medical field.

You will find the following icons in this Guide:



**The Key** – marks the paragraph where the key answer to the question is given.



**Slippery Road** – marks the paragraphs with explanations on the important practices that should be considered to avoid health dangers when considering cosmetic procedures



**The Info Sign** – provides detailed information on the features available at **Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic**

# 1

## What Is Laser Hair Removal?



Laser hair removal is a **method of removing unwanted hair** using a special kind of light. While the word "**laser**" is often used, the technology called **Intense Pulsed Light (or IPL for short)** can also be employed to remove body and facial hair. Both laser and IPL are light treatments, but Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) is not technically a laser. **Laser Hair Removal** terminology was already popular when IPL was developed, so the term stuck and is now often used to refer to **both** laser and IPL hair removal techniques.

Photoepilation therapy is the proper terminology, however, it is not commonly used and rarely understood by the general public.



**Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic** uses the **Palomar StarLux 500** light therapy platform. Palomar is a leading researcher and developer of laser and light-based systems for aesthetic treatments. Palomar pioneered the optical hair removal field when, in 1997, it introduced the first high-powered laser hair removal system. Since then, many of the major advances in light-based hair removal have been based on Palomar technology.

# 2 Laser vs. IPL – Which Is Better?



Short answer: They are both very effective\*.

In the early days of hair removal laser was the only choice. However, laser light is very focused which makes it challenging to use on large areas. Hair removal performed with a laser is usually more painful.

IPL technology was developed in the late 90s by **Palomar Medical Technologies**, a Massachusetts-based company, in an attempt to decrease patient discomfort, improve treatment results and speed-up treatments. The IPL beam is less focused than the laser, which makes it possible to cover larger areas in a single pulse and to make treatment sessions shorter.

IPL treatments are less painful but they deliver results comparable to laser treatments. This has been demonstrated in several clinical studies that compared laser and IPL treatments\*.



Palomar is recognized worldwide as knowledgeable in the area of light-based treatment. The **Palomar StarLux 500** light therapy platform used in **Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic**, allows usage of both laser and IPL modalities for skin therapy. Hair removal is performed with the StarLux IPL hand-piece designed specifically for that application.

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\* BrJ Dermatol. 2010 Nov; 163(5):1007-13 Hair removal in hirsute women with normal testosterone levels: a randomized controlled trial of long-pulsed diode laser vs. intense pulsed light. Haak CS et al. PubMed ID 20731651

# 3 How Does It Work?

Unlike conventional hair removal techniques like shaving or waxing which remove hair by cutting or pulling it out, **laser hair removal targets the hair root, called the follicle**. A hair follicle contains cells that are responsible for hair growth. If those cells are disabled, hair stops growing and falls out.



During laser hair removal, a **laser or IPL beam reaches through the skin to individual follicles**. The intense heat produced by laser or IPL beam **disables the follicle's growth cells**, which stops future hair development.

This process of targeted destruction of follicle cells is called **selective photothermolysis**.

The treated hair will continue to appear for 7 to 30 days post-treatment. This is not new hair growth, but the treated hair being expelled from the skin.

Multiple treatments are required to achieve optimal results.

# 4 What Areas Can Be Treated?

Laser and IPL hair removal is used to reduce the amount of unwanted face and body hair.



Laser and IPL hair removal is safe for any body area. Very frequently it is used on the upper lip, chin, underarms, legs and bikini line in women. For men, the back, chest and arms are the most highly requested areas for laser hair removal.



A proper consultation with an experienced laser specialist is highly recommended to determine individual suitability for the procedure. It is important to talk to your laser hair removal provider to understand your treatment options and set reasonable expectations before committing to the procedure.



**Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic** offers free initial consultations during which medical staff is available to assess your skin and answer all your questions.

# 5

## Am I A Candidate For Laser Hair Removal?



Hair and skin colour can affect the success of laser hair removal. Because both laser and IPL beams target dark pigment (melanin) in hair follicles, **the ideal candidate is someone with light skin and dark hair.**

**Patients with darker skin** can still undergo laser hair removal with very successful results, but do, typically, require a few extra treatments as the laser/light is attracted to melanin. Treatments must be performed safely to ensure optimal results while treating the hair without affecting the surrounding skin.

**Laser hair removal is not very effective for naturally white, blond or gray hair** as those hairs contain very little pigment. In our experience one can expect blond and gray hairs to become a bit finer but significant hair reduction should not be expected.

It is important to remember that laser hair removal is a **medical** aesthetic procedure, and the best way to find out suitability is to book a consultation with your hair removal clinic.



Recent rise of cheap “group buy” deals offering deeply discounted prices for laser hair removal should be considered with **great caution**. One should remember that **laser and IPL treatments can be seriously damaging** to your skin if performed improperly. Saving money now may end up costing you more in the future to correct damage caused by improper procedures.



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# 6 Is Laser Hair Removal Permanent?



While frequently advertised as permanent, laser and IPL hair removal cannot guarantee complete and permanent inhibition of hair growth. Some hair may be resistant to the laser and IPL treatment and can return following treatment. The new hair's growth is usually lighter in colour and can typically be controlled with maintenance treatments once or twice per year for a few years. While the body responds excellently to laser and IPL treatments, more maintenance is usually required for the face.

One should keep in mind that new hair can develop in the skin in response to multiple factors, like pregnancy or hormonal imbalance. Also, high natural level of testosterone in men stimulates development of new hair follicles by itself.

In short, laser and IPL hair removal delivers stable and long-lasting hair reduction with no downtime and minimal discomfort.



At **Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic** you will receive the correct number of treatments that is optimal for you to achieve long-lasting hair reduction. Follow-up appointments will be scheduled at your convenience for maintenance treatment.



# 7

## Is Laser Hair Removal Painful?



There is some level of discomfort during the treatment as heat produced by beams of light penetrates the hair follicles and destroys them. To decrease any discomfort, some manufacturers use different cooling techniques to avoid heat damage of the surrounding tissue.

Even though they are both very efficient, laser treatment is generally more painful than IPL. Pain level is often related to the hair's thickness and colour. As the light energy is attracted to the pigment of the hair, the coarser and darker the hair, the more pain should be expected. However, keep in mind that the body part being treated is also playing a role in the pain level. Less sensitive areas like legs, bring less discomfort than more delicate areas, like bikini or face.



Effective cooling of the area significantly decreases pain. The **Palomar StarLux 500 system**, used in **Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic**, employs patented and clinically tested skin **contact cooling technology**, which greatly reduces discomfort and risk of complications. Palomar's cooling technology ensures that the tip of the hand-piece is constantly kept at  $\sim 4^{\circ}\text{C}$ . It feels like an ice cube that helps to calm the skin during the procedure.

Thanks to the very large spot size of the Palomar StarLux 500 hand-piece, the procedure can be performed much quicker than with other machines, which also contributes to greater comfort.

Local numbing cream is an additional option available for situations when pain causes too much discomfort.

# 8

## What Are The Side Effects?

Although side effects are rare, they can occur in some patients, especially those who tan on a regular basis. Patients that take photo-sensitizing medications or those with darker skin are also at a greater risk for developing complications.



**Skin irritation** is the most common side effect of laser and IPL hair removal. It may feel like a mild sunburn and should subside within 3 to 7 days. Other rare side effects include crusting or scabbing. If this happens, notify your hair removal provider and follow the instructions they provide.

**Pigment changes** may occur following laser hair removal. The skin may **appear darker or lighter** on the site of treatment. This change is usually temporary and disappears with time. Skin lightening is usually seen in people with darker skin, and often indicates that the treatment was performed at incorrect settings.



While it is quite rare, laser and IPL hair removal may cause blistering, scarring or other changes in skin texture. These complications often happen when too much energy was used during the procedure, or when individual sensitivity to treatment is very high. In very rare cases laser and IPL hair removal procedures may cause the opposite effect to hair, causing it to grow thicker and at higher density. The exact reason for this is unknown.



As with any medical procedure, laser and IPL hair removal must be performed by experienced and properly trained staff. Physician availability for follow-up is important to address side effects or complications quickly. **Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic** has a physician on-site to address any treatment complications or adverse reactions.

# 9

## How Many Treatments Are Required?

Laser and IPL beams target only those hair cells that are in the phase of active growth and development **during the treatment**. Not all hairs are active at any given time, as some of them are dormant. Laser and IPL treatment does not affect hairs in the dormant stage, so multiple sessions spaced over time are required to ensure that all hairs in the active phase are treated.



**Four to eight treatments are typically required** to achieve satisfactory hair removal. Treatments must be spaced approximately **three to eight weeks apart depending on the hair properties and area being treated**.

After the main course is completed, **maintenance treatments** are required approximately **once or twice per year** to remove smaller and thinner hairs that may grow back. Many patients don't require any maintenance after the first year and are fine with shaving if they have minimal hair growth.



At **Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic** you will receive the number of treatments that is best for you. You will be advised on what to expect during and after treatments, as well as what care should be taken for your skin in between procedures. Follow-up appointments will be scheduled at your convenient time to ensure the best outcome.

# 10 How Much Does It Cost?



Laser and IPL hair removal procedures might sound expensive initially, especially if you take into account that several treatments are required to achieve good results. However, when calculating the number of times you will need to maintain the hair removal over your lifetime compared to another, less permanent method of hair removal, the overall costs are actually quite low.

Below are approximate costs of laser hair removal for different parts of the body. The prices are approximate and may differ from clinic to clinic. They also depend on individual skin colour and hair density.

	Upper Lip or Chin	Full Face	Underarms	Arms	Chest/Breasts	Back	Stomach	Bikini	Legs
Price per treatment	\$50 - \$150	\$150 - \$300	\$50 - \$150	\$100 - \$400	\$150 - \$350	\$300 - \$500	\$300 - \$450	\$130 - \$200	\$300 - \$600

Table 1: Approximate Average Cost Of Hair Removal By Body Parts



**Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic** has a flexible discount system to help patients with the costs of cosmetic medical treatments, including hair reduction. Patient financing is also available through **iFinance Canada**.

# C onclusion

When trying to decide which clinic is best for you, it is important to consider the obvious like whether or not their hours fit with your schedule and if the location is convenient. But also remember that this is likely an intimate procedure so ensure the person who will be performing it is not only well-trained and educated but also courteous and trustworthy. Book a consultation prior to purchasing any treatments or packages and be sure to ask all of your questions at this time. Staff should be friendly, confidential and willing to answer your questions without hesitation.

Meet your technician and make sure he or she will follow you through all your treatments. If technicians change each time you do your treatment, the overall outcome may decrease.

If you feel like something is off about the clinic or you are being pressured to purchase something you aren't ready for, then trust your instinct and don't book with them.

**Consultations** are your best tool for understanding the procedure and everything that is associated with it. Use it to your benefit. Consultations are also important for your provider to determine what can be done and what to expect from the treatment.



*Be cautious* when the **purchasing** of services is **required in advance without a consultation** provided. Also, it is unlikely for non-medical providers, like beauty salons, to own and operate medical-grade laser and IPL machines (those machines by law must be sold to doctors only.) Always ask if the machine used for hair reduction is a medically-graded device, and if a doctor is available on site for follow-up and consultations.

# About Us



**Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic** is a leading medical cosmetic clinic in **Richmond Hill**, Ontario, specializing in **non-surgical cosmetic medicine, laser cosmetics and advanced skin care**. We are a **physician-led** and operated facility and have a **doctor on staff** at all times ready to assist patients. We **strive for perfection** in what we do and proudly **stand behind the results** of our treatments as we use only products and equipment **backed by clinical trials and research**.

**Dr. Robertus** is one of the few physicians in Canada specializing in the all-natural **Vampire Facelift™** with Selphyl® - the procedure, which uses your own **blood to trigger new skin cell production**, smooth wrinkles and folds, and to improve complexion.

We perform dermal filler injections, like **Radiesse®, Restylane® and Teosyal®** to correct facial wrinkles, augment lips and cheeks, and rejuvenate hands. **BOTOX Cosmetic®** injections are done for wrinkles and jaw line contouring. **BOTOX®** therapeutic injections are done for excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis) and migraine headaches prophylaxis. All injections in our clinic are done by the doctor.

Some other services we provide are: **hair reduction, chemical peels, acne treatments, photofacials (IPL)** to improve **rosacea**, sun, age and **brown spots, pigment issues and broken blood vessels**. We also offer non-surgical **skin tightening** and **fractional laser skin resurfacing** treatment. We treat **stretch marks and skin scars** using FDA-approved laser equipment. Treatment of **spider and thread veins** on legs is also offered.

# How To Find And Contact Us

**Dr. Robertus Laser & Cosmetic Clinic** is located in Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada

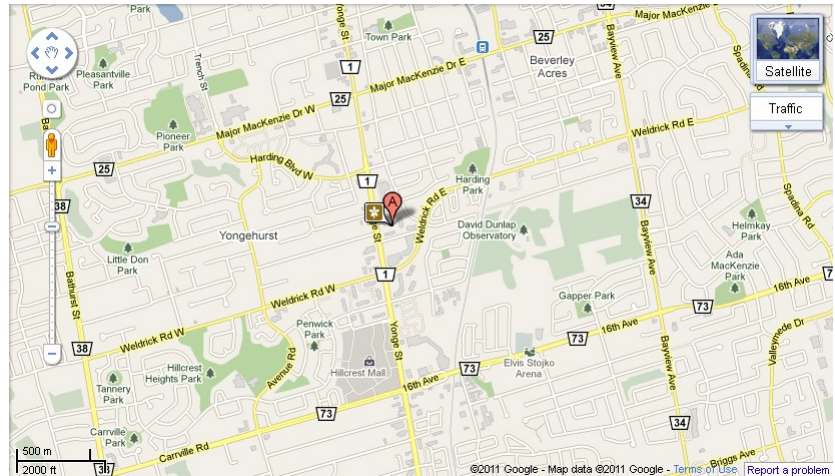
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Our staff have over 15 years experience in the cosmetic esthetic industry. We are here to inform you of all your options with honest expectations.



Do not hesitate to call us 905-883-1033 or contact via our web site [www.robertusmd.com/contact-us](http://www.robertusmd.com/contact-us)

**“If You Dream It, we Can Help You Achieve It!”**