

# Consultation Highlights

- Basics of electrolysis (brief overview of the process)
- The Equipment we use
- Importance of Moisture content
- Hair Growth Cycles
- Possible Side Effects
- Prep before a treatment
- Pain management
- Aftercare

## **Basics of Electrolysis**

Electrolysis works by inserting a blunted metal probe into the hair follicle, and introducing an electrical current. This current acts to destroy the cells responsible for regrowth, and the offending hair is removed immediately after the treatment has taken place.

The process is done 1 hair at a time, and so it usually requires multiple sessions to remove all of the unwanted hair. We generally need to treat an individual follicle 1-3 times each in order to attain a permanent kill, but even if we fail to kill the hair at first, it will come back in much weaker and finer than before the treatment.

## **The Equipment We Use**

We currently are using the Apilus Platinum Pure machines. Running at the highest frequency available (27 mhz), it is also one of the most comfortable machines on the market today. This machine allows us precision control with a very high kill rate while dramatically reducing your risks of overtreatment. While the machine does allow for us to perform every type of electrolysis, we find that we typically achieve the most efficient and gentle treatments overall when using thermolysis.

## **The Importance of Moisture Content**

Moisture plays a key role in the hair removal process. Thermolysis works by introducing an alternating current under the skin. This current ONLY interacts with the moisture content of your skin. It will vibrate the water molecules found near the root base at a very intense speed. This vibration causes friction, and the friction produces the heat that is responsible for destroying the cells causing regrowth in the follicle.

What this means is that the greater your moisture content, the more efficient your treatment will become. Many people believe that simply adding moisturizing lotion will be sufficient. While this does help us in other ways (better skin elasticity does allow us easier access to the pores), the moisture itself does not usually penetrate deeply enough into the skin to be affected by the current directly. So what can you do? Drinking water the day before and the day of your treatment will be the most effective way to hydrate your follicles. Not to mention staying well hydrated has many other health benefits and can expedite your healing process.

## **Hair Growth Cycles**

Your hair does grow in cycles and it can take up to a year for all of those cycles to become active and produce a hair that we can then treat. This means that the visible hair you have may just be the tip of a rather large iceberg. So how do you tell the difference between New Growth and Regrowth?

**New Growth** - this is typically of a similar thickness and length of the surrounding, untreated hairs. It may pop up within days after a treatment in a given area, and will quickly grow to full thickness.

**Regrowth** - visibly stunted, these hairs are thinner and finer than most of the surrounding hair we see. They sometimes will thicken back up over time, but if they do they typically require much more time to do so. Often they stay thin and fine, even after a rather lengthy amount of time.

Once we clear an area, we won't see any hair from the treated follicles for a minimum of 6-8 weeks. New growth may become visible before then, but that will be a completely new cycle that has been waiting to activate.

At first, this can give the impression of little to no progress, but this is an illusion. Over time, the cycles will sync up together and you will notice you stay clearer for much longer periods of time. This is why most of the work is done within the first few months, and gradually tapers as treatment progresses.

The hair also grows in distinct stages, and which stage the hair is currently in will have an impact on the efficiency of the treatment.

**Anagen** - active growth | We love this phase! The root is nice and deep so we don't need to worry as much about causing undue damage to the skin. It is also attached to a steady blood supply, and where there is blood there is moisture which is vital to the process.

**Catagen** - transitional | Once the hair detaches from the blood supply it starts to progress toward the surface, and leave a little 'tail' behind it. There is less moisture than we find in the Anagen

phase, but the hair is still nice and deep so we are still able to do a decent amount of destruction to the cells that require it.

Telogen - resting phase | Now the root of the hair has turned into a little white ball of pure keratin. It is held in by the skin and is usually very close to the surface of the skin. We can still treat hair in this phase, but we have to be more cautious with our power settings since we cannot go as deep. Hairs treated in this phase are the most likely to return as stunted regrowth.

## **Possible Side Effects**

### Temporary

Redness & Swelling - these are a given pretty much for everyone. Some people have more redness, some experience more swelling. Average duration is 1-3 days for light/average treatment, 2-7 days for a more aggressive treatment.

Urticaria/Hives - An allergic reaction to the probe may cause you to have little bumps or hives after a session. This is a common reaction and, while unsightly at first, usually fades very quickly.

Cold sores - Caused by a virus, it is impossible for electrolysis to give you cold sores if you have not been exposed to the virus. But if you do carry the virus, the heat from a treatment around the lip area may cause an outbreak. This is incredibly rare. To date we have never had a client experience this particular issue.

Ingrowns - If the hair is to come back, it will be much thinner and finer than it used to be. This may cause the hair to have difficulty breaching the surface of the skin, causing the hair to become ingrown. Usually your body will push the hair out on its own after some time. If it is shallow enough, we can still treat these hairs. If they are too deep, we will wait for the body to push the hair closer to the surface, or we will recommend having a dermatologist remove it.

Scabbing - Occasionally a small crust will form at the follicle opening producing a scab. As long as you do not pick at the scab, it will heal just fine and your skin will return to normal afterward. If you pick at the scab and remove it prematurely, this may cause pitting to appear.

### Semi-Permanent

Hyperpigmentation (declared permanent after 1 year with no changes). Tons of products exist to prevent this from becoming permanent if it appears. Reducing sun exposure is the #1 thing you can do to prevent this from becoming permanent.

## Permanent

Scarring - risk associated with overtreatment (we use insulated probes and take all precautions necessary to prevent this from happening)

Pitting - Most often results from prematurely removing scabs. Letting scabs heal properly will be your best defense against this.

## **Before Care**

When you come in for a treatment, please make sure the hair you want removed is long enough to be firmly grasped with tweezers. For most people this is 2-3 days worth of growth. If the hair is longer than ¼ inch, please trim the hair so we can spend less time finding the root and more time treating it.

Exfoliating the skin prior to a treatment can help as well, especially if you are prone to ingrowns. This allows us easy access to the follicle and may help reduce scabbing.

Take or apply an medication you may be using for pain management with adequate time for it to take effect before your appointment.

## **Pain Management**

The process involves cellular destruction, and because of this some degree of discomfort is to be expected. The level of discomfort varies widely from one person to the next, and also from one area of the body compared with another. This ranges from people who fall asleep on the table during a session all the way to people who feel they need the aid of prescription strength solutions. Fortunately, there are a wide variety of options available to you to help you manage the pain in a way that suits your needs.

OTC - pills (advil, Ibuprofen, Tylenol, etc...) or lidocaine creams

Prescription - pills (vicodin, percocet, tramadol, etc...), higher percentage numbing creams, & numbing patches

If pain tolerance is an issue, we can work with you and your doctor to help find a solution that works for you.

## **Aftercare**

Here in the office we will do a process called Cataphoresis. This involves having you hold onto a grounding wire as we introduce a soothing direct current to the treated area after we apply a cooling aloe vera based gel. This current will help reduce the redness and swelling, tighten your skin to prevent bacteria from getting in and causing infections, and will expedite the healing process slightly. In addition, the aloe vera gel we use is ionized, and the current will drive the moisture back into the skin deeper than just letting it soak in normally would be able to achieve. We zap the moisture out, we want to put some back.

Then, once you get home, the general rule of thumb is to treat the area like you would a sunburn. Be gentle with the skin until it has returned to normal sensitivity (typically 1-2 days), and try to keep it clean and limit your sun exposure. Don't pick at any scabs, and try not to touch the treated area too often until it has had a chance to heal. Heavy makeup should be avoided for the first 24 hours, but light mineral-based makeup that lets the skin breathe is OK to apply sooner than that.