

7 Ways to Remove Unwanted Hair

Overview

Unwanted hair is a common occurrence that can happen on the face, including the chin and upper lip, as well as the back, legs, feet, and even the tops of the toes.

According to WebMD, approximately 30% of women's bodies are covered in terminal hair, i.e., the hair that exists on your head, eyebrows, underarms, and back. For men, it's significantly higher, with approximately 90% of the body being covered in terminal hair.



While for some people, unwanted hair is a result of genetics, for others, certain medications or the presence of health conditions like polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) can lead to an increase in unwanted hair growth.

What are the different methods of unwanted hair removal?

Hair removal methods can be of the following types:

- **Temporary methods of hair removal**

Temporary methods of hair removal include shaving, threading, plucking, waxing, and the use of depilatory creams. These methods can either focus on removing the hair grown above the skin surface or target hair removal at the root. While some can be easy to do at home and are typically pain-free, you will have to do it on a recurring basis in order to remain hair-free.

- **More permanent methods of hair removal**

This includes laser hair removal and electrolysis. Most people will require multiple sessions (six to eight) to see long-lasting unwanted hair removal results.

From tweezing and waxing to more permanent methods such as laser hair removal and electrolysis, learn about the best-unwanted hair removal methods, including what's suitable for you.

Temporary Hair Removal Methods

Shaving

Using a razor or electric shaver, this hair removal method removes just the tip of the hair shaft that's above the surface of the skin. Shaving is a method that's commonly used on your face, legs, and bikini area and is typically pain-free. However, the upkeep required will be more frequent as results only last up to three days before you find your hair growing back.

Threading

Commonly practiced in India, threading is a hair removal method that is often used to shape eyebrows. Some people may also get their chin, upper lip, cheeks, and sideburns threaded. This technique uses a piece of thin cotton thread that is looped around each hair follicle and pulled out in quick succession.

Depilatory Creams

Available as lotions, creams, or gels, hair removal or depilatory creams make use of chemicals to break down the protein keratin that is present in hair. Depilatory creams are a pain-free method of unwanted hair removal and are commonly used on the face (including upper lip and chin), as well as your legs and underarms. However, this may not be the best option for people with sensitive skin as the chemicals present can cause allergic reactions or irritate the skin.

Tweezing

Also known as plucking, this form of unwanted hair removal pulls out individual hair shafts from the roots using tweezers. Perfect for precise areas like your eyebrows and upper lip, tweezing is easy to do at home, relatively pain-free, and a cheaper alternative to other forms of hair removal. The results of tweezing can last up to two weeks before the hair needs to be removed again.

Waxing

Another form of root hair removal, waxing, can be done at home—using pre-wax strips—or in the salon with a professional waxer using either hot or cold wax. Waxing is a form of unwanted hair removal that targets the hair at its root and, depending on the area of your body, can be a painful process. However, the results are longer lasting (up to four weeks) compared to other forms of hair removal.

More Permanent Hair Removal Methods

Laser Hair Removal

This form of unwanted hair removal is more permanent in nature and makes use of a concentrated beam of light to target the entire hair follicle and prevents its regrowth. Studies indicate that laser hair removal is effective after several sessions, with most people seeing a noticeable reduction after three months of treatment. According to WebMD, laser hair removal can be used to treat unwanted hair on your face, chin, back, arms, legs, bikini line, and underarms.

Electrolysis

Performed by trained professionals, electrolysis is a permanent form of unwanted hair removal. A tiny needle containing an electrical current is inserted into each individual hair follicle in order to destroy it at the root. Electrolysis is currently the only FDA-approved form of hair removal treatment that results in permanent results. However, like laser hair removal, electrolysis requires several sessions spread out over six months to a year before lasting results can be seen.

For people that want to deal with unwanted hair, several methods of unwanted hair removal currently exist and range from inexpensive and pain-free procedures to permanent and sometimes painful treatments. If you're wondering what method of unwanted hair removal is best for you, get in touch with a dermatologist or licensed professional.

Adjuvant Hair Removal Therapies

Dermatologists can also prescribe a prescription cream that helps slow down hair growth for people that want to decrease the growth of their hair. Commonly prescribed creams include Vaniqa and Eflora. According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, the results of this method can last for up to eight weeks after stopping use. However, it's important to note that these prescription creams do not get rid of your unwanted hair. Instead, patients need to continue to use some other form of hair removal in conjunction with Vaniqa which helps to slow down the rate of regrowth.