

# Look towards the light

Since its discovery in the 1960s, laser hair removal has been studied extensively and many different types of procedure have gained licensing approval. Aesthetic practitioner and laser and skin specialist Sarah Williams guides us through the options

**L**aser hair removal was discovered in the late 1960s by dermatologists who found that hair removal was a side effect of using lasers to treat certain skin conditions. It works by means of an intense, adjustable light that uses special wavelengths to damage the hair or hair follicles. Enough damage is done to prevent or reduce the amount of hair that grows back.

Laser hair removal has few dangers; as with many treatments, it is important to notify your practitioner if you are taking any medication, and if you plan to undergo the procedure it is wise to stay out of the sun for a few weeks or risk an ineffective treatment.

The relatively low-risk nature of laser hair removal means it has become one of the fastest-growing non-invasive cosmetic procedures in the world.

**IPL or Intense Pulse Light:** Not, strictly speaking, a laser, IPL can deliver hundreds of wavelengths in each burst of light. Recommended for all skin types ranging from white to black and all types of hair except unpigmented.

**YAG:** The YAG laser emits an intense beam of light which passes safely through the upper skin layers to

eliminate hair follicles without harming the skin. YAG laser can be used for all skin types, including tanned skin, but may not produce effective long-term hair removal.

**Diode Laser:** The Diode laser is the most effective hair removal light source by far and is recommended for white skin. The diode laser has a longer wavelength than other lasers used which may improve treatment results on darker skin types.

**Alexandrite Laser:** A shorter wavelength system which is recommended for very white skin. It is the fastest laser and appropriate for quick treatments on large surface areas.

**Ruby Laser:** The original and first system of laser hair removal. It has a longer track record than other laser hair removal options but is also therefore an older technology. Ruby laser is recommended for light skin and dark hairs, but is not to be used for hair removal on darker or tanned skin and light or white hair.

**The Soprano XL:** Hair removal is fast and virtually pain free. The hair follicles are slowly heated to a



temperature that destroys them, preventing hair regrowth over time (approximately six to eight treatments). The diode laser system makes the Soprano XL extremely safe and effective for all skin types, including tanned and darker skin tones. Hair removal can be achieved on all parts of the body comfortably, even including sensitive areas such as the face, underarms and bikini line.

Hove Skin Clinic –  
[www.hoveskinclinic.co.uk](http://www.hoveskinclinic.co.uk)

Brighton Laser Clinic –  
[www.brightonlaserclinic.co.uk](http://www.brightonlaserclinic.co.uk)

Clearstep Enhance –  
[www.clearstepenhance.co.uk](http://www.clearstepenhance.co.uk)