

LASER HAIR REMOVAL: SUN SAFETY + PIGMENTATION RISKS

There are some important things to keep in mind as a laser hair removal client at Anti-Aging Centers of Connecticut. We strive to keep every client safe and educated, so here are some sun safety tips for the most-effective and safest treatment for our clients.

STEP 1: Keep the area being treated free of color

If you have fair skin and are planning on using the Alexandrite laser for hair removal, it is especially important to keep any areas being treated free of color and sun exposure, especially during the summer months. Use SPF 30 or higher and make sure to cancel appointments with enough notice if you suspect you have had sun exposure or gotten color change to the area being treated. For a safe treatment, we require 4 weeks of NO change in the color of skin before treatment.

STEP 2: If I get tanned, what are my options?

If you get tanned, we can test patch the area after 4 sun-free weeks to make sure it is safe to treat. Another option you may have is to use the laser generally recommended for tan skin- the N.D. Yag. This laser requires 1 week out of the sun with no color change. Please call the office if your color changes, this way we can accommodate you with the proper laser. To be a candidate for the Yag, you must have dark brown to black hair. Light haired clients are recommended to wait until their skin gets as close to their natural color as possible before resuming treatment on the Alexandrite laser for the most effective and safest treatment.

STEP 3: Keep an eye on your skin for safe treatment

Hair removal lasers target dark pigment and work by focusing on the pigment in your hair follicle. With tanned skin, the laser can 'see' your *skin* pigment, instead of just your *hair* pigment, resulting in hyper-pigmentation (darkening of the skin in the shape of the laser spot size), hypo-pigmentation (lightening of the skin in the shape of the laser spot size), or burning. Hyper/hypo-pigmentation can last as long as a tan (though it is different for every person), and is best avoided by not exposing your skin to the sun.

If you DO hyper/hypo-pigment, keep your skin from additional sun exposure. Give your skin time to fade before tanning in that area again. Pigmentation can happen from either laser, so always make sure you are safe in the sun; no sun exposure 1 week after treatment, no matter which laser you're using. Use SPF 30 or higher or cover the area to avoid issues as best as possible.

Contact us immediately if you feel you have had any unwanted reaction.

STEP 4: Avoiding folliculitis

We recommend no exercise, gardening, or prolonged outdoor activity for 24 hours after treatment to avoid causing folliculitis (irritation of the hair follicle). Sweat, oil, and heating of the body aggravates the hair follicle even more than it already is from laser treatment, and this can result in pustules, redness, heat, inflammation, and even infection. Keeping the area clean of bacteria and sweat helps prevent this. Wash with antibacterial soap and use sunblock (SPF 30+) for 1 week to help prevent this.

STEP 5: For clients who tan easily; Avoiding sun-induced hyperpigmentation

Clients who tan easily (darker skin types) or who have a hormonal sensitivity to sun and pigment (due to pregnancy, lactation, menopause, photosensitive medications, etc) are at a higher risk of pigmenting the area they are treating if they have prolonged sun exposure, so avoid at all costs for a minimum of 1 week.

STEP 6: In Summary

Please postpone your laser treatment if you have recently been tanning or plan to do so in the weeks following your appointment. Treating sun-exposed/tanned skin increases your chances of burning and/or hyper/ hypo-pigmentation. Be sure to use sunscreen at all times (SPF 30+) and avoid sun for 1 week post-treatment. As always, please keep us informed of any antibiotics or any other medications that may cause photosensitivity. Please shave before your treatment (no waxing or plucking). This allows for a more effective and comfortable treatment.