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## **LASER HAIR REMOVAL**

The **LIGHTSHEER DIODE LASER SYSTEM** is used in this office, as indicated for the treatment of unwanted or excess hair. The Lumenis Corporation, formerly ESC/Sharplan, of Israel, manufactures this system.

The **LIGHTSHEER** is a laser of sufficient wavelength to penetrate to the hair root. Hair density, thickness and root depth determine response to treatment. The Lightsheer laser is suitable to treat any body area. For most patients, five treatments, spaced 6-12 weeks apart are necessary to achieve an adequate level of clearance, but those with darker skin are likely to need additional treatments.

Individuals with fair skin are the best candidates for these systems but darker toned skin may be treated after preparation with prescription bleaching creams.

Those susceptible to herpes infection at treatment sites should receive anti-herpes medication (Zovirax or generic acyclovir, Valtrex or Famvir) starting the days before and for a few days following treatment. Prescriptions will be ordered at the office visit or by telephone.

### **ADVANTAGES:**

- Laser hair removal is the most practical method of removing large numbers of facial, neck, body, arm and leg hair.
- Faster and more efficient than electrolysis.
- Long term to permanent hair reduction similar to electrolysis.
- Minimal discomfort, which may be reduced further by the prior use of surface anesthetic creams (Nurses will provide instruction).
- Reduces occurrence of “ingrown hairs.”
- No significant “down time”
- Quick, convenient, and highly professional treatment by Registered Nurses.

### **DISADVANTAGES:**

- LIGHTSHEER requires close shaving prior to treatment.**
- Permanence of hair reduction varies with individual response. Yearly re-treatment is the rule for most males. Long term to permanent hair reduction at underarm and bikini areas is often achieved.
- Very fine facial hair is the most difficult to remove and often requires several

treatments. Coarse, dark hair is easier.

- Waxing or tweezing must be avoided for five to six weeks before treatment but shaving and chemical depilatories are allowed.
- Tanning and “self-tanning” creams should be avoided for 4 to 6 weeks prior to treatment and for one month following.
- Superficial burns, crusts or blistering may occur but have been rare in our experience. Scarring or pigment changes may result from burns. Infection of burns may lead to serious consequences including death but no such event has been reported in treatments for thousands of patients.
- Hair removal treatment is contraindicated during pregnancy but not during breast-feeding.
- Special cautions, small test area trials and special instruction, are indicated for those with diabetes and keloid formers but may be contraindicated when these conditions are severe or unpredictable.
- The use of light sensitizing medications (Sulfa and some Tetracycline related antibiotics, thiazide diuretics and some other medications) increase burn risk.
- Some patients do not respond to hair removal but most are responsive. At least five treatments are required to appreciate effectiveness.
- White, gray, blond, and light red hair do not respond to treatment.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

A cold gel is applied to protect the skin surface and minimize discomfort. The **LIGHTSHEER** has the advantage of a Chilltip, which adds to the cooling effect of the gel. The laser is applied with a spot sized hand piece. Hairs in active growth phase (Anagen phase) are connected to the root and respond to treatment. Hairs in resting phase are not affected and must return to active growth phase (8 – 12 weeks) to be susceptible to treatment. Up to sixty percent of hairs are in Anagen at any given time at most areas.

#### **ALTERNATIVE METHODS:**

Electrolysis has been in use for several years and is best for facial hairs when fine or few in number. Waxing, plucking, epilating instruments, skilled technician epilation and chemical depilatories are available and have long histories of use. Other laser systems are available for hair removal; referral will be made at your request.

#### **COSTS:**

Very expensive equipment and high maintenance costs, in addition to professional expertise in use, require appropriate cost structures. Our fees are reasonable and designed to allow general access. Please call our office for prices.