

## **Hair Removal Methods**

Unwanted facial and body hair is a common problem that can be a source of great distress. In the vast majority of cases there is an inherited or genetic tendency to develop the excess hair growth.

There are two main types of direct hair removal. The first, depilation, is the removal of the part of the hair above the surface of the skin (such as shaving or trimming). The other, epilation, is the removal of the entire hair, including the part below the skin (such as waxing, lasers, or electrolysis).

There is a topical medication, Vaniqa (eflornithine HCl) (see separate information sheet) has been approved by the FDA to help slow hair growth on the face and under the chin. This medication is a supplement to the method that you already use to remove the hair. Hopefully whatever method that is can be done much less frequently. The effect of this medication is not permanent, and once it is discontinued, hair returns to its normal growth cycle.

The only possible permanent methods of hair removal are by laser or electrolysis. Laser hair removal involves using pulses of light to destroy the hair follicle underneath the skin. Electrolysis involves using a probe to deliver electricity that causes localized damage to the areas that generate hairs underneath the skin. Usually multiple treatment sessions are required and these procedures may be costly and are not regularly covered by insurance. If you are interested in one of these permanent techniques, I can supply you the names of providers who provide these treatments.