

What is Electrolysis?

Education:

The state of Florida requires 200 hours of practicum and 120 hours of academic learning. The educational process includes the following:

- Causes of Hair Problems
- Hair & Skin Anatomy
- Neurology & Angiology
- Bacteriology & Disinfection
- Dermatology
- Principles of Electricity
- Electrolysis Practicum
- Treatment Procedures

Electrologists take a certification and are licensed in Florida, with continuing educational requirements.

History:

Women and medical professional have tried several means to remove hair. Some examples are:

- inserting unsterile needles into the follicle thinking this would seal up the follicle
- applying sulphuric acid to the skin
- surgical removal of the follicle
- placing a barbed needle in the follicle then twisting it

Needless to say none of these worked without damaging and scarring the skin.

In 1875, Dr. Michel, an ophthalmologist, first successfully removed hair by electrolysis on a patient that had ingrown eyelashes.

What causes hair problems?

- Congenital, meaning you are born with it, genetics an example would be people from the Mediterranean area have a tendency to be more hairy.
- Topical, having a chronic topical stimulation increases the blood supply and causes hair to grow. An example of this would be having a cast on your leg. The chafing/rubbing of the cast on your skin causes the stimulation.
- Systemic, this is the distribution of hormones. Hormones can “stir up” the hair cells to life. An example of this is puberty, pregnancy, and menopause. This is the most common cause of a hair problem.

I should also mention that medications, stress, endocrine disorders, disease and skin grafts can also be causes of hair growth.

Three types of electrolysis:

Galvanic, Thermolysis, and Blend

- Galvanic: has a direct current that produces lye in the follicle. This decomposes the follicle by a chemical action. This method takes approximately 15 seconds per hair. It is the best method but rarely used due to cost and the time it takes to produce the lye. Discovered in 1875.
- Thermolysis: has an alternating current devised in the 1920's. The probe is placed in the follicle and heat is applied. The heat is caused by friction of atoms. The probe itself does not heat up. The heat is hottest at the tip of the probe. The heat kills the live hair cells and surrounding tissue. The length of time the current is at the probe, the strength of the current and moisture are important factors. Most commonly used.
- Blend: combines both galvanic and thermolysis. An electrologist can apply the current either simultaneously or sequentially. The follicle is destroyed by heat and chemical action. This was developed in the 1940's.

It is important to understand that your hair has three stages of growth. They are anagen, catagen and telogen. Why is this important?

Electrology will work only on one stage of growth. The anagen stage is the only stage that has live germ cells present. The electrolysis will prevent hair from developing a new hair because the heat "kills" them.

How does electrolysis permanently remove hair?

A probe is placed inside the hair follicle. Heat is applied in a split second by the electrical current, which then destroys the hair cells present.

Is electrolysis painful?

Pain tolerance varies from person to person, so the amount of pain is individually based. There are topical creams that one can use to ease their discomfort.

Is electrolysis really permanent hair removal?

Yes. This method dates back to 1875. Medical authorities, such as the FDA have tested this method.

What if hair seems to return while I am being treated?

The hairs that were not at the anagen stage will grow back because they did not have the live hair cells. Also, some hairs present now may have been cycled out and not evident at the time of your last treatment.

What do I do with the hair growth in between treatments?

It is best to clip with scissors, shave or bleach the hairs. Stay away from waxing, tweezing or using depilatories.

Why can't I wax or tweeze?

When you use these methods you pull the hair out of the dermal papilla. The blood source for that hair rushes to that follicle to repair it. In turn, what happens is the hair will start to grow in darker, coarser and deeper.

Will I have swelling and redness after a treatment?

It is normal to have some redness and slight swelling. This usually is gone within 20 minutes to a couple of hours. It is important you follow the post treatment guidelines.

Is electrolysis expensive?

Compared to other beauty and medical treatments, the cost is moderate. It's a small price to pay for a lifetime of unsightly, unwanted hair.

How long does it take and how often do I need to come?

This depends from person to person and how much hair they want removed. Typically the treatment regime is to come once a week. As the hair growth slows, we will add more time in between treatments.

Is there a risk to becoming infected?

Disposable and sterilized needles are used after each use the needles are thrown away. They are never reused. You should stay out of the sun for two days, wait to get a facial or any dermatologic procedures because it may interfere with the healing process. You may use antibiotic creams/ointments to help your skin heal, and use hypoallergenic make-up only.

Contraindications:

- Pregnancy
- Skin Lesions
- Infections
- Contagious skin disorders

Rule of thumb is when in doubt, do not treat.