

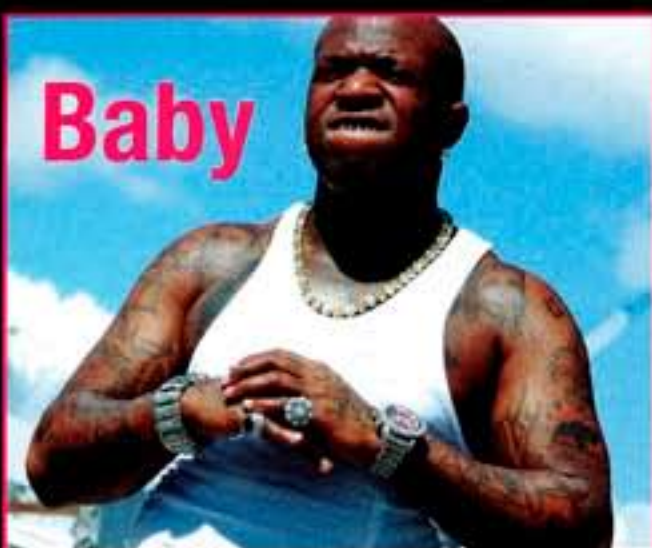
Catching up with Bill Cosby

JULY  
2012

# SISTER

## siste

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## Laser

The first step to having an effective laser hair removal treatment is finding the right doctor with the right tools, said Dr. Amy Derick, a medical and cosmetic dermatology expert.

"It's important to do your research and go to someone who has experience with skin of color to make sure they use the proper laser." Using the wrong laser could cause burning and irritation, she said. "The best laser for darker skin is the Nd: YAG because it has a longer wavelength."

You can expect about a 20-percent reduction in hair growth after your first visit, and that percentage will increase over time. It usually takes 4-6 treatments for optimal results. Pricing for the arms and legs ranges from \$300-\$600 per treatment.

## Depilatory

Sometimes it's easiest to head to the beauty aisle and purchase a depilatory. These creams break down the hair's keratin, essentially dissolving the hair. Since your fingernails are made of keratin, too, try to keep the depilatory off of your nails when applying the formula, so that you don't risk weakening them.

You also have to be cautious of potential allergic reactions, said Dr. Manjula Jegasothy, who specializes in ethnic skin and is the founder of the Miami Skin Institute in Florida. "It's hard to predict how skin will react, so do a little test patch the night before you plan to use it." Dr. Jegasothy said to make sure you use the products in the specified areas that are listed on the bottle, since the formula could be too strong for sensitive parts. These products range from \$5-\$20.

## Depilar

Depilar is an enzyme-based gel treatment that's performed in spas after hair removal. During each session, hair is removed by waxing, sugaring, threading or tweezing. Immediately afterward, two gel products are massaged into your skin. These gels target the empty hair follicles by breaking them down to stop hair growth.

The gel's application is pain-free, but you should steer clear of this treatment if you're allergic to salicylic acid. Avoid wetting your skin at least two hours before treatment and for about 45 minutes afterward because water will alter the pH of your skin. Don't freak out if you don't get instant results after your treatment; it may take 5-6 weeks over a 12-24 month period before you see a reduction in body hair growth. The cost ranges from \$20-\$200, depending on the body part that's being treated.

## Epilator

Go the electronic hair-removal route with the epilator, a hand-held, at-home treatment that works by gripping hairs and pulling them out by the roots. If this sounds painful, you're right: It can be, especially the first time around. But the pain and amount of hair growth lessens with each use.

To lessen pain on the first use, start with a wax and use epilation to treat regrowth. It also helps to epilate after a warm bath or shower. An epilator can leave you hair-free for up to 4 weeks.



**Epilady Legend 4 (\$79.95, Target.com or call 866-374-5239 for retailers)**

## Phototherapy

There are also at-home, light-based phototherapy devices that reduce unwanted hair growth over time. You roll the device over your skin against the direction of hair growth—don't be freaked out by the zapping sound—and then buff the treated hairs. The device doesn't get hot or irritate your skin, but you will notice the faint smell of burnt hair, though it isn't as strong as if you'd burned your hair with a flat iron or curling iron.

Definitely use lotion afterward because the buffer can make your skin appear ashy. Initial treatments take longer than shaving, but you can think of it as an investment since its effects last longer.



**no! no! 8800 hair removal system (\$270, Neiman Marcus and trynono.com)**

## Beauty blunders

We've all had a few oopsies and ouchies when it comes to hair removal. Read on for some cringe-worthy moments and even a laugh or two from S2S readers.

"I wasn't allowed to shave but my friends were doing it, so I took a razor from my mom's bathroom and shaved. I was almost finished when I took off a two-inch-long piece of skin from my right leg. I want to say I was about 9. I still have remnants of the scar. I tried to front like I got it playing outside."

—L.J.

"As a grown-up I experimented with Nair for the first time, using it under my arms. I guess I used it wrong ... it left an embarrassing dark black scar under my arms, so I was in straight T-shirts for a couple of weeks during the summer."

—S.N.

"I could tell you about the first time I shaved my Suzie just out of boredom and curiosity. I used Kerl lotion 'cause I had no shaving cream. I'd also never shaved anything before. I was 12. I nicked my lips, which hurt a few days later and was all itchy in my pants when it was growing back. I never went bald again!"

—D.B.

"While in the shower I put a nice glob of Nair on the hair of my lower region, not knowing that Nair is not supposed to touch that area at all. You can see where this is going. Yes, my lower region, including my bikini line, was on fire! I immediately washed it off, but that seemed to make it worse. To make a long story short, I ended up spending the rest of the night with no bottoms on at all; it needed to heal."

—M.C.

I went for laser hair removal under my arms and forgot to shave before my appointment, so they gave me a razor with no shaving cream. The bathroom had no door and they ran out of paper towels, so I'm in this bathroom in my bra, trying to shave with water and not get all my clothes wet. I missed a lot of spots, and that makes the laser removal process painful!

—S.A.