

Hair Removal

Responsibilities and delegations		
Version	Date Approved	Date for review
2020/2	November 2022	November 2024
This policy applies to	All staff	
Policy approval	Quality & Risk Committee	

Definitions

Depilatory Cream: a cream or lotion used to temporarily remove unwanted hair from the body

Procedure: Preparing to use the cream

1. Find the right cream
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When choosing a cream, think about the participants skin's sensitivity and where you plan on using the product. • If you are using the cream on the participants face or bikini area, make sure you choose formula specifically for those areas, as the skin is more sensitive. • Depilatory creams can come in different forms, from aerosols (or sprays), gels, and roll-ons. • A roll-on won't be as messy as a cream or gel, but the creams and gels let you control how thick you apply them (and usually the thicker the better). • If the participant is sensitive to smells, try a cream that has added a scent to cover the eggy smell of the cream reacting to their hair.
2. Seek professional advice if participant has very sensitive skin, a skin condition, or takes any medications that may affect their skin
<p>Because the cream is applied directly to the skin, the chemicals that break down the proteins in the hair will also interact with the proteins in their skin and could cause a reaction.</p> <p>Seek advice before using any depilatory creams if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the participant has developed rashes, hives, or allergic reactions to any skin products in the past. • the participant uses any acne medication, or other medication that increases their skin's sensitivity. • the participant has a skin condition such as eczema, psoriasis, or rosacea
3. Do an allergy test 24 hours before using any new creams, even if it has been used before
<p>Hormone levels are always changing, and they cause skin to change, too. Even if the participant has never had a reaction to the hair removal cream before, their skin's chemistry may have changed slightly and could cause them to react.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply a small amount of cream to the area where you plan to remove the hair. Follow the directions, leaving the cream on for the advised amount of time and removing properly. • If the tested area does not react in the next 24 hours, it is safe to use the depilatory cream.

4. Examine the area for any cuts, scrapes, moles, scars, cold sores, irritated or sunburnt skin

Minimize the chances of having a bad reaction to the cream and potentially developing a rash or chemical burn.

- Don't apply the cream directly to any scars or moles, sunburn, rash or cuts. Wait until they have completely healed before going ahead with the application.

5. Assist participant to take a shower or bath if required, making sure to dry skin thoroughly afterwards

This will ensure the skin is free of any lotions or anything that might interfere with the hair removal cream. Make sure their skin is dry afterwards, as most depilatory creams need to be applied to dry skin

- Don't use hot water, as this can dry out the skin and may increase chances of irritation
- Soaking in warm water can soften the hair, which may make it easier to break down. This is especially helpful for very coarse hair, like pubic hair.

Applying the cream

1. Read the directions that came with the cream and follow them exactly

- Different brands and different products within that brand will have different instructions. Following the directions will give you the best results and help protect the skin
- Check the "use by" date to make sure the cream is not expired. An expired depilatory cream will not work very well and give you poor results

2. Apply a thick, even layer over the hair you want to remove

- Apply non-sterile gloves and using your fingers or a spatula, (if provided) spread the cream evenly over the skin
- Uneven application means the hair could come off in patches

Never apply a hair removal cream to the nostrils, ears, the skin around the eyes (including the eyebrows), genitals, anus, or nipples

3. Leave the cream on for the amount of time recommended in the directions

- This can be anywhere between three to ten minutes
- Most directions recommend checking a small area about halfway through the process to see if hair comes off.
- The shorter the amount of time the depilatory cream is in contact with the skin, the less likely redness or irritation will develop.
- Set a timer or use the timer on your phone to make sure you don't exceed the limit.
- Some tingling is normal, but if the participant complains of any burning or you see any redness or irritation, remove the cream immediately.

Depending on the reaction, you may need to seek further advice from your manager or health professional, fill out an incident report and document in the participant's file.

You may also notice a bad smell while you are using the cream. That's a normal side effect of the chemical reaction that is breaking down the hair

4. Remove the cream with a damp cloth or spatula if provided

- Wipe gently--don't rub the cream.
- Rinse the area with warm water to make sure the cream has been removed entirely

If you don't rinse off the residue, the chemicals could continue to react with the skin and cause a rash or chemical burn.

- Pat, don't rub, the skin dry
- Apply a moisturizer to the area to keep it smooth and hydrated (being mindful to sensitive skin).
- Its normal for skin to be a little red or itchy after use (wearing loose clothing and avoiding any scratching to the area can help with this)

Report and document any redness or discomfort that continues after a few hours or gets worse to your supervisor or health professional.

- You should not use hair removal cream in the same area for at least 72 hours after use

Hair removal using clippers

- Provide an explanation to the participant and obtain verbal consent
- Assess the site where hair removal is required and document the presence of any lesions such as moles, warts or other skin conditions in the participants file

1. Attach the blade

- Using non-sterile gloves, position a new blade on top of the clipper head

2. Clip the hair

- Depending on the type of clipper, some can be used when the skin is wet. This may be useful when showering some participants, particularly when clipping the genital area
- Hold the clipper handle as you would a pen. Stretch the skin with one hand whilst clipping with the other by resting the clipping blade flat on the skin and clipping against the grain of the hair.
- ALWAYS move the clippers away from your body with a gentle push.
- **DO NOT** pull the clippers toward you, across the participants skin or apply greater force than needed.

3. Remove the blade

- When finished, turn the clipper off and remove the blade placing it in the sharps container
- A single use disposable clipper blade should be used for each participant. (This is applicable if the clipper is the property of Life Choice and not the participants own)

4. Clean the clipper handle

- Wash the clipper handle thoroughly with soap and water or wipe with a surface disinfectant

5. Charge and Store

- Return clipper handle to its charging adapter to ensure it is charged for its next use