



# Q&A

We speak to **Petrina Nugawela** from MBA Clinics about laser hair removal

**Aesthetic Medicine:** Over the last five years how has laser hair removal affected your business, do you see it as a growth market?

**Petrina Nugawela:** Laser hair removal is now an accepted solution with both women and men looking for a permanent solution for unwanted hair. I feel the efficacy of laser hair removal has finally been fully accepted by medical doctors treating patients with excess hair problems and this in turn has given patients the confidence to seek help.

The change that I see most is in parents requesting for their teenage daughters to have laser hair removal, as the more conventional methods of waxing and shaving cause more skin problems. Patients are more informed with regards to safety and efficacy and they usually come looking for reputed clinics.

**AM:** What are the top things to consider when investing in a laser hair removal system?

**PN:** Making the right decision is very important – it will shape your business and reputation for years to come. For me the most important factors were the reputation of the company, servicing, training and support i.e. could I build a relationship with them? The system itself is also important. The majority of my patients have skin of colour, however, I wanted the option of treating all skin types, plus the versatility of treating coarse and fine hair successfully. The speed of the machine/treatment and the option of maximum comfort are all important factors too. This is why I chose the Lumenis LightSheer device.

**AM:** Is there a safe option for treating dark skin and how do you tackle this?

**PN:** Treating dark skin successfully is one of the challenges that most practitioners face. We can all treat dark skin but giving them a result without any side effects is the challenge. The two systems that can do this are the diode and the Nd:Yag machines. At consultation, making an assessment of your patients' skin condition is crucial. A test-patch must be carried out and minimum of 48 hours wait before treatment. Darker skin types have a one to two day delay in side effects.

You always start on a low-fluence and gradually tease the skin to accept a higher fluence. Skin cooling and a high factor sun block is very important.



Pictures courtesy of Dr Sushil Tahiliani

**AM: Fine light hair is often avoided or has become an obstacle, what advice do you have?**

**PN:** Fine hair can be treated on shorter pulse duration with a high fluence. Treating fair hair is more of a challenge and I would advise doing a combination of laser for the dark hair and electrolysis for the fair hair.

**AM: Is patient comfort a consideration and how do you manage it?**

**PN:** Patient comfort is very important as treatment can take anything from half an hour to two hours. Having a machine that gives patients the option of being less painful is a huge advantage especially for our male patients. Using a cooling machine such as the cryo6 makes the treatment experience much more pleasant especially post treatment.



Pictures courtesy of Dr Girish Munavalli



Pictures courtesy of Dr Suzanne Kilmer

**AM: What is considered a 'good result' and how soon can one achieve this?**

**PN:** I consider it a good result when I do a test patch on a patient and, when they return for treatment, they are amazed at the difference, not only of the hair loss but the improvement of the skin. I always tell my patients that the best visible results are on the second treatment. Once you have given your patient two treatments she or he should not have any regrowth for at least four weeks.

**AM: Are clinical studies on efficacy important factors when choosing a system?**

**PN:** Clinical studies are a key factor in deciding on a suitable machine. The LightSheer family has the largest number of clinical studies in the world, which gives me confidence to market the product to my patients, knowing that there is evidence behind the brand. **AM**



**Petrina Nugawela** is a specialist aesthetic practitioner and the founder of MBA Clinics. She started off her career in clinical research before moving into medical aesthetics. She has been practising at MBA, situated in the grounds of Wexham Park Hospital, for over 15 years. Her expertise lies in treating skin of colour. She is a national trainer for Lumenis UK.

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