

Laser hair removal: No training required?

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Canada needs minimum training standards for laser hair removal operators, as currently anyone, trained or not, can legally operate a laser machine for hair removal in Canada, states an editorial in *CMAJ* (*Canadian Medical Association Journal*).

In Canada, no license is required to operate a laser hair removal machine and training is usually provided by the manufacturer. Only the machine itself is licensed by Health Canada.

"Although controlled trials of laser hair removal have shown that severe adverse effects are uncommon, there have been reports of burns, pigmentary changes, scarring, reactivation of [herpes](#) viruses and even paradoxical hypertrichosis, the growth of unwanted hair," write Diane Kelsall, Deputy Editor, Clinical Practice, CMAJ and coauthors. "Eye complications have also occurred when the eyes have not been shielded adequately."

Health Canada recommends that anyone considering laser hair removal "be sure that the person who will operate the device has the training and experience needed to perform the procedure safely and effectively" and that the client should ask for references and check that the device is licensed. Without any specific knowledge about techniques and equipment for laser hair removal, the client is required to judge the fitness of the operator and the suitability of the machine.

"To allow untrained staff to operate laser devices with such potential for harm is unreasonable," conclude the authors. "Canadians should insist

that Health Canada, our national regulator of medical devices, set minimum training standards for operators of lasers used for hair removal."

Provided by Canadian Medical Association Journal

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