

A Lot Of Women Are Shaving Their Faces. Here's What You Need To Know.

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Date: November 29th, 2016

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/women-face-shaving_us_583482f4e4b09b6055fefa45

So you want to try shaving your face, eh?

Many women have long touted facial shaving, an at-home, less intense version of dermaplaning. It is the practice of using a razor to shave the peach fuzz and hair off of your face in pursuit of hair removal and smoother, exfoliated skin.

Perhaps you've heard that Marilyn Monroe and Elizabeth Taylor were fans of the practice, or that your makeup will go on more smoothly without your peach fuzz. Watch enough YouTube videos and it can all really start to sound appealing, even if you've never given a second thought about the hair on your face.

There is no shortage of online resources singing the praises of face shaving. But there are, of course, plenty of questions to be asked about the procedure.

The first fear many women have is that shaved hair will grow back faster, darker or coarser. Dr. Debbie Palmer, who co-founded the Dermatology Association of New York and has her own line of skin care products, told The Huffington Post that "hair will not grow back thicker or faster. Shaving does not change the number of hair follicles in the skin or the rate of hair growth."

That notion rings true for people across the board. Stephanie Kaulesar of hair removal salon Spruce & Bond once told InStyle that thicker hair is an illusion "caused by the razor cutting your hair off at its thickest point." Amy McMichael, chair of the Department of Dermatology at Wake Forest Baptist Health, told Scientific American back in 2014 that a lack of "exposure to pollutants, chemicals and the sun" and the shape of stubble can make hairs appear darker and coarser, but are actually unchanged in regrowth. In fact, long term hair removal can end up reducing regrowth due to "repeated trauma."

As far as methods go, the jury is out on the best one. Many bloggers swear by the Tinkle eyebrow razor, which is used on dry skin in short, swift motions at a 45-degree angle. Palmer said she recommends “electric or battery operated shavers.” Kate Somerville, who famously divulged that many celebrity clients favor the method, uses “her own brand of face wash” and “a Gillette Mach3” once a week, according to the New York Times.

Larkin Clark, a San Francisco-based lifestyle and beauty writer and editor, told The Huffington Post that after trying two different tools — first a men’s razor and then the smaller eyebrow razor — it was a combo of the smaller razor with lathered up shaving cream that she found the most successful, though she wasn’t ever totally sold.

“Overall it wasn’t enough of a change to keep up the regimen for the long-term. It also made my face sensitive to some skincare products, which was especially tricky when I’d need to put treatments on acne-affected areas that couldn’t be shaved while avoiding the freshly shaved areas around them,” she said.

Whatever tool you choose to do the job, it’s what comes before and after that really makes a difference. Celebrity makeup artist Kari Bauce recommends washing first with a cream cleanser, and using some toner as antiseptic immediately after. “Wait at least an hour before applying any foundation, makeup or moisturizer that isn’t specifically formulated for sensitive skin as the area may be prone to irritation immediately after shaving.”

One blogger we came across, Brye Ashley, admits to having sensitive skin. She shared photos of a bad reaction she had after not taking the proper steps after shaving her face.

The most trying aspect of this process appears to be maintenance. Nearly every article about it insists it’s something you have to keep up with once you start, and that people with sensitive skin should be cautious. “I advise patients with active acne to wait until the acne has resolved or improved before they shave. Shaving over active acne lesions can cut or inflame the skin and risk infection,” Palmer said.

If you ask us, the most important thing to consider is for whom you’re shaving your face. A quite frankly insufferable viral video from 2011 features three women, including former Bachelor contestant Michelle Money, and kicks off by saying that women should never, under any circumstance, have hair on their faces.

Money, who does in fact have beautiful skin, has gone on to make quite a few videos in which she shows off her face shaving methods and explains that people who don’t think they need to get rid of their facial hair are “lying to yourself and to your husband and/or boyfriend who is secretly pissed off that you have a mustache.

Eye. Roll.

If you are uncomfortable with your facial hair and you want to do something about it and you don't have acne or extremely sensitive skin, then sure, yes, shaving your face can be a desirable choice.

Just please, for the love of Gillette, remember that much like anything else in life, that choice is yours and yours alone.

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