

NEW SECTION

A hairy situation

‘Sprouting whiskers? Here’s what you can do to naturally remove unwanted facial hair.

BY DINI COHEN, BA, RHN AND NIKKI YEH



Menopause can be a difficult time and a woman’s confidence can plummet if she develops hirsutism — hair growth around the lip, chin, abdomen, and back. While hirsutism is a relatively harmless condition, it can deeply impact one’s self-esteem.

Hirsutism is caused by a number of factors including: stress, prescriptions, insulin-resistance, polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), as well as genetics. More often, the underlying cause is a hormonal imbalance, with an excess of the male hormone androgen (testosterone) in relation to estrogen. During the reproductive years, estrogen stimulates a blood protein called sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG). When this hormone is high it deactivates the male hormone androgen so women do not develop typical male hair problems. As women approach menopause, estrogen levels decrease and the higher levels of androgen stimulate hair growth.

To remove facial hair many women turn to various hair removal options. Tweezing is quick, however, it can distort the follicle and cause the hair to grow in even thicker. Shaving is easy, though you may need to shave every day to prevent stubble. Waxing is ideal for removing those practically clear hairs you just can’t see. In fact, you can find wax strips that have natural ingredients, which may be more suitable for sensitive skin. Look for pine resin (a non-synthetic tree sap that’s naturally sticky) and canola oil (a vegetable oil that’s rich in vitamin E and reduces skin irritations).

“The hair on my head is decreasing, while hair in new places is popping up at an unnerving rate. I’ve never had to remove hair from my face before. Since starting menopause I’ve started waxing my lip and other areas. The hairs aren’t dark, but I actually hate the white ones even more.”

- AZAR M., 65
NORTH VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

BONUS TIP

If you have loose skin on your face, make sure to hold your skin taut while peeling off wax strips. This will help prevent your skin from getting increasingly saggy.

Moreover, you can naturally control your excess androgen levels by eating foods that don’t contain preservatives, which can unbalance your hormones. Try a whole foods diet; besides decreasing insulin levels (excess insulin is stored as fat), it provides nourishment. For example, dark green leafy vegetables such as kale, spinach, and broccoli are high in folic acid.

If you feel that hirsutism develops suddenly and is accompanied by other typical male features such as a deep voice, consider visiting your health care practitioner. He may discuss reducing stress levels to help you naturally balance your hormones. ♡

REFERENCES

Haas, Elson MD. *Staying Healthy with Nutrition*. Berkley, CA: Celestial Arts, 1992.
Balch, Phyllis A. CNC. *Prescription of Nutritional Healing*. NewYork, NY: Avery, 2000.