

## Q & A on Hair Removal for All Skin Types

*The problem with most hair removal lasers is that they cannot treat a broad range of skin types. Most lasers are only suitable for people with light skin tones and dark hair. The Nd:YAG laser is a laser that is FDA-cleared for hair removal in darker skin types. This offers relief to many who suffer from a condition known as Pseudo-folliculitis Barbae (shaving bumps), an ailment widespread among people with curly hair and dark skin. As the hair follicle grows out after being cut or plucked, it immediately curls and reenters the skin, causing inflammation and irritation. The Nd:YAG laser works by thinning the hair follicles, providing long term relief.*

In this interview, we talked with **David Goldberg, M.D., director of the Skin Laser & Surgery Specialists of New York & New Jersey**, about removing unwanted hair from all skin types.

**Q. Dr. Goldberg, why is this news?**

A. Until recently we've only been able to safely remove hair from light skin using laser technology. Now we have newer systems that use longer wavelengths of laser energy, allowing us to remove hair from all skin types, including black, Hispanic and Middle Eastern skin.

**Q. Why have lasers only been limited to light skin?**

A. Previously available lasers are quite highly absorbed in skin pigment and can easily destroy it. Skin pigment is almost transparent for the wavelength of the Nd:YAG laser so all the energy is absorbed in the hair shaft.

**Q. Who makes this new laser?**

A. There are a variety of manufacturers that make this laser. Popular models include the Altus CoolGlide®, Laserscope Lyra®, ICN CoolTouch Varia® and Lumenis VascuLight® Nd:YAG lasers. We were among the first to evaluate these highly successful systems in darker skin types and have extensive experience using all four of them.

