BEAUTY NOTEBOOK

bikini line basics

When putting on a swimsuit is a hairy situation, here's how to deal.

BY meredith gray

you want: | try this:

FAST REMOVAL!

SHAVING

HOW-TO: To avoid irritation, shave with the direction of hair growth *first*, then glide the razor *against* the grain for a closer shave. The hair here sprouts in different directions, so you may need to adjust your razor position at each section.

try: Gillette Venus Embrace Shine, $6, drugstores

ZERO PAIN!

DEPILATORY

HOW-TO: For pain-free results that last several days, a depilatory is your best bet, because it dissolves hair at the root. But the chemicals can be harsh, so use it only on the hairs that peek out on the sides of your bikini.

try: Nair Cool Gel, $7, drugstores

LASTING RESULTS!

WAXING

HOW-TO: Waxing can hurt, but it also keeps you smoother longer! To lessen the pain, pop an aspirin 20 minutes before you wax. Then sprinkle the area with talc; the powder absorbs excess oil, so the wax sticks to the hairs (not your skin)!

try: Sally Hansen Naturally Bare Waxing Strips for Body, $8, drugstores

make it bare-able

Beat the struggle over stubble in three easy steps.

prep your skin

Take a warm shower before you do any removal—it will open your pores and soften the hair, making it easier for it to wriggle out.

start small

No matter what method you use, don't attempt to tackle too much hair at once—you'll get smoother results if you work in little sections.

exfoliate every day

Keep ingrown hairs at bay by using a body scrub—it will slough off dead skin that can trap hairs below the surface.

Your biggest bikini Qs—answered!

Q: Is it okay to tweeze random hairs?

A: Yes, just wipe the area with an antiseptic (like hydrogen peroxide) before and after to prevent bacteria from getting into the pores.

Q: I broke out in a rash after shaving. Help!

A: If your razor is dull or if you use too much pressure while shaving, you can irritate your skin. Apply a hydrocortisone cream to soothe it, and avoid wearing too-tight undies for a few days to let your skin breathe.

Q: Can I still wax if I have my period?

A: It's better not to—your pain tolerance is lower when you have your period, so waxing actually hurts more! Instead, wait until a day or two after it ends.

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