

## Genital Hair Removal WCH

**Hair removal in the genital area prior to vaginoplasty is not mandatory but it is recommended.**

Intraoperative hair removal is performed during surgery but is likely insufficient to provide permanent hair removal. However, for the majority of patients, hair growth inside the vaginal canal is minimal and does not cause any physical complications. If there is a significant amount of hair growth in the canal, it can cause issues such as skin break down contributing to vaginal bleeding and discharge. Hair inside the vaginal canal can also be psychologically upsetting to some patients. If hair does become a concern in the vaginal canal, manual removal using tweezers is possible. Unfortunately, a permanent solution to hair inside the canal is not available. We understand that most patients will not have hair removal due to the cost, pain, vulnerability, or accessibility of this service. We support client centered decision making and support your choice around this.

### If you choose to do hair removal:

Both laser and electrolysis have demonstrated efficacy for hair removal in this context but will depend on your hair type. Remember to plan ahead. You will need multiple hair removal treatments over a 6-12 month period (usually 3 – 5 clearings for laser, 5 – 8 for electrolysis) to ensure effective and permanent hair removal. Please stop hair removal treatments at **least three weeks prior** to your surgery to permit the area to heal and recover and for opportunity to cauterize any visible hair follicles during the operation.

### Where to remove hair:

**The Scrotal Sac** (most important): Follicles will be scraped and electrolyzed during surgery, but hair growth cycles prevent us from getting all of the dormant hair. Remove hair from the top portion of the scrotum to just above the perineum, and along the midsection extending to the groin crease.

**The Penile Shaft** (important): Skin from the penile shaft and mid-scrotum will be utilized in creation for the new vagina.

**We've come up with a sketch of the recommended areas to remove hair from:**



Transition Related Surgery Program

Women's College Hospital