

Why Women Are Getting Their Bikini Area Threaded and Why Derms Aren't Totally Into It

Liz Ritter, Executive Managing Editor | March 23, 2018



Her Beverly Hills, CA office offers a wide range of lasers, but dermatologist Rhonda Rand, MD still loves threading.

"It definitely has a place in hair removal! I do think laser hair-removal is the most effective method to permanently remove hair, but hair must be brown, black or dark blond, and it's not effective for peach-fuzz facial hair. Plus, you can't shape your eyebrows with a laser. Threading is really great for soft, fine hair or blond, red or gray hair. It's particularly useful if you use Retin-A because you shouldn't wax."

Shobha Tummala also offers laser hair removal, waxing, sugaring and threading at her namesake hair-removal salon in New York. The menu specializes in threading services for the

face, but she gets plenty of requests for "out-of-the-box threading" for areas like the hands and fingers and her staff relies on the method to clean up any stray hairs left behind from waxing or sugaring services, including the underarms and the neck.

While she doesn't think threading is so great for larger body areas as it can take a long time, she does thread on the bikini area as well. As for the pain factor? Tummala compares threading to tweezing and says the most unique part about the process is more in the way the thread feels on your skin.

"Threading allows us to get the tiniest hairs from the root that waxing sometimes won't be able to get. The simple process involves a piece of thread that is twisted and pulled along areas of unwanted hair acting like a mini-lasso, lifting the hair follicle directly from the root without the use of any chemicals or unnecessary tugging on delicate skin. It is very precise and allows our specialists to have greater control over which hairs are removed and it is 100-percent natural—there are no artificial waxes, chemicals, or invasive techniques used."

Like Dr. Rand, Tummala praises threading for its ability to target peach fuzz and other short hairs (aka stubble) that wax would not be able to get. But, when it comes to threading the bikini area, that's one move Dr. Rand wouldn't recommend. "Because the hairs have pigment and are thick, lasers are the best option there; it's amazing permanent removal. I did it 20 years ago and I've never had to wax or shave again."

New York dermatologist Jody Levine, MD also thinks laser hair removal is the most efficient option because it drastically reduces hair growth, and in her opinion, threading has some downsides.

"I like laser hair removal because it can be performed on any area of the body, small or large, and it can also help get rid of the ingrown hairs and bumps. For some people, the hair never grows back; for other people, there may be regrowth following a hormonal shift, but then a few more laser treatments as a touch-up and the hair is gone again," she says. "I don't recommend threading for patients with acne and/or sensitive skin and I don't think the results last long. It only works on flat surfaces and it is not effective on areas like bikini lines—plus, it can aggravate and rupture acne, damage the skin and spread infection."