

Silk'n Home-Use Hair Removal Device Optimizes Professional Tx

By Bob Kronemyer, Associate Editor



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R. Stephen Mulholland, M.D.
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Patients can now conveniently reduce hair growth in the privacy of their own home thanks to the Silk'n™ system from Home Skinovations (Yokneam, Israel). The company's patented Home Pulsed Light™ (HPL™) technology uses low pulse energy, is FDA cleared to treat all areas of the body except the face and achieves results that nearly rival in-office procedures.

"The patient experience at home with Silk'n has been excellent. In fact, it has been easier than we had envisioned, probably in large part due to the patient teaching aids that are succinct and easy to follow," noted Tina Alster, M.D., director of the Washington Institute of Dermatologic Laser Surgery, in Washington, D.C. These aids include a quick guide card with bulleted points and a DVD.

Dr. Alster studied a group of 20 women with a variety of skin types (up to skin type V) and unwanted brown or black terminal hair in four non-facial sites: axilla, forearms, bikini and lower legs. All patients self-administered three consecutive treatments of Silk'n at home, spaced two weeks apart. At six months, hair counts were reduced 40% to 61%. "The lower legs showed a greater hair reduction than the three other areas," Dr. Alster reported.

Besides having a lightweight and easy-to-hold applicator, Silk'n comes with a safety sensor-trigger and a simple user interface. The device also has a 750 pulse replaceable lamp cartridge and the large spot size treats 6 cm² with each pulse. "I think we are just in the beginning of a huge wave for home-use devices," said Dr. Alster, a clinical professor of dermatology at Georgetown University (Washington, D.C.). "Certainly the removal of unwanted hair is the most popular skin treatment worldwide. Silk'n works nearly as well as my expensive, high-powered lasers and it is safe with proper training. Patients love

it. Treating under the arms takes mere seconds, whereas the lower legs may take 20 minutes."

R. Stephen Mulholland, M.D., a cosmetic plastic surgeon in private practice in Toronto, Canada and Los Angeles, Calif. believes Silk'n is the ideal complementary device for in-office procedures. "No matter what wavelength you use for hair removal, you generally have a fair number of patients who do not achieve 100% permanent reduction," explained Dr. Mulholland, who offers Silk'n to his patients upon completion of a series of five in-office sessions. "This home device protects the investment the patient has made and/or extends that investment by providing longer hair-free intervals."

Dr. Mulholland has increased his fee for a series of in-office sessions to include the Silk'n unit, which costs about \$800. He has also followed 150 patients for nearly one year. "Some of these patients use Silk'n once a month or once every two months (to maintain and touch-up results)," Dr. Mulholland conveyed. "There are also some physicians who cannot afford big hair removal devices, so Silk'n represents an opportunity to enter the hair removal business."

Compared to TRIA from SpectraGenics (Pleasanton, Calif.) — an at-home diode laser hair removal device — Silk'n "is not as painful and the effective treatment size is probably about 300% larger, so it is much faster," said Dr. Mulholland, who has tested the two systems side by side. Furthermore, Silk'n operates on regular household current, unlike the battery of the TRIA which provides power "for only a limited number of pulses, so you cannot treat an entire lower leg on one charge. Combined with in-office light-based treatments, Silk'n optimizes the patient hair removal experience."