Units B26 and B27

Provide female and male intimate waxing services

What you will learn
- Intimate waxing services
- Maintain safe and effective methods of working when providing female and male intimate waxing services
- Consult, plan and prepare for waxing services with clients
- Remove unwanted hair
- Provide aftercare advice

The Standards set out detailed performance criteria regarding:
- maintaining safe and effective methods of working when providing female and male intimate waxing services
- consulting, planning and preparing for treatments with clients.

The majority of these requirements apply to all beauty therapy treatments and are therefore covered in detail in the Professional basics unit and G22 Monitor procedures to safely control work operations. You should also refer back to You and the skin, and Related anatomy and physiology, for information on the hair growth cycle, differing types of hair and the structure of the skin. The anatomy of male and female genitalia is covered here, as you need to be very aware of the structures you are working on.

Before beginning a waxing treatment you will also need to refer closely to the Professional Basics section, and the chapter on Body treatments – theory and consultation. Please also consult with your Awarding Body for the codes of practice regarding waxing and intimate waxing services and the HABIA website, as they have complete guidelines for salons and training providers. For all organisational and legal requirements you will need to revise the section ‘You, your client and the law’, Professional basics, with special consideration to personal protective equipment (PPE) and health and safety legislation.
Introduction

In recent years waxing services in salons have expanded to include not only minimalist bikini-line waxing for females, but complete intimate hair removal for both males and females in the genital areas. We tend to think of it as a modern trend, but actually this service has been around since ancient times, with the Greeks, Romans and Egyptians choosing to wax off their hair, as it was more comfortable and hygienic in the heat.

However, it is now big business and its growth in popularity means that if a salon does not offer this service then revenue will be lost, as clients will move to a salon which does. The prices vary, but some London salons are charging £65–70 on average for a female treatment, £80–120 for males, including intimate and a full back wax. In more rural salons the average charge is £50–60 (prices correct in 2010). The outlay for equipment is not high – a salon will normally have the waxing equipment for legs, underarms and face, anyway. A little more investment in specialist products means a high profit return and an increase in clientele, once word spreads that your salon offers this service and is good at it.

This is the key. This is not a service to be offered unless the therapist is a trained specialist, highly confident and professional, and able to cope with the intimate nature of the work. There is nothing dignified about this treatment for the client so the whole service needs to be handled with the utmost care from beginning to end, in an assured, considerate but matter-of-fact manner. However, once you gain a client’s trust and offer outstanding results, you will have continuous repeat business and recommendation of your services to their friends – and word-of-mouth advertising is the best there is!

Intimate waxing services

What you must know

Prior to starting this unit, you will need to refresh your waxing knowledge to meet the underpinning knowledge requirements, as it may have been some time since you completed your Level 2 qualification in waxing.

You will find it useful to revisit the following topics in particular:
- factors determining hair growth
- equipment and materials for waxing

Ingredients and composition of waxing products
- types of wax and waxing products
- benefits and effects of waxing
- other methods of hair removal.

In this section you will learn about:

- anatomy of male and female genitals
- hair removal options and their effects on waxing
- recent ingredient developments
- waxes specifically for intimate waxing
- sugaring
- suitability of hair-removal products for intimate areas
- what’s available – the range of intimate waxing.

TREATMENT BENEFITS OF AN INTIMATE BODY WAXING TREATMENT

- Soft, smooth skin
- Hygienic
- Attractive to the opposite sex
- No embarrassing stray hair showing in swimwear
- Reduced body odour especially in the summer months
- Enhanced performance for athletes and swimmers
- Sensual and clean feeling
- Cool in the heat
- No razor burn, ingrown hairs or post-shave itching
- Attractive to the opposite sex
- Reduced body odour especially in the summer months
- Enhanced performance for athletes and swimmers
- Sensual and clean feeling
- Cool in the heat
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Anatomy of male and female genitals

You need to fully understand the anatomy of the region you are waxing. Although the reproductive and hormonal functions are covered within the Anatomy section, these anatomical diagrams are more concerned with the external positioning of body parts rather than the internal functions.

**Male genitals**

| The penis | Made up of involuntary muscle and erectile and fibrous tissue, covered with skin |
| Glans penis | The head of the penis has a flap of skin called the foreskin which covers and protects the head of the penis. In some cultures and religions this is removed when the male is a baby for religious or hygiene purposes. This procedure is called circumcision |
| Scrotum | Made up of two sacs or pouches, each containing a testicle |
| Testicles | The testicles (also known as testes) are glands which secrete sperm for reproduction and the male hormone testosterone. They are suspended in the scrotum and surrounded by three layers of skin |
| Perineum | The skin between the anus and the base of the scrotum |
| Anus | The end of the digestive tract where faeces (stools) are removed from the body as unwanted material from digested food |

**Female genitals**

| Public mound (mons pubis) | A fatty layer of skin over the pubic bone, with a high covering of hair follicles |
| Labia majora and minora | The inner and outer folds of skin (labia meaning lips) Made up of fat skin and fibrous tissue, with a high number of sebaceous glands and the external outer surface covered in hair follicles. The vulva is the term commonly used to describe the external genitalia |
| Clitoris | Erectile tissue found at the top of the labia, covered in a thin membrane just above the opening to the vagina |
| Vestibule | The triangular area between the clitoris and the inner surface of the labia minor |
| Greater vestibule glands | Found in the labia major on either side of the vaginal opening, which secrete mucus to keep the vagina moist |
| External urethra | The opening out of the body for the urinary system |
| Perineum | The skin between the anus and vagina – in some women this is cut or tears during childbirth and is resewn, so be careful of recent scar tissue in the area |
| Anus | The end of the digestive tract where faeces (stools) are removed from the body as unwanted material from food digested |

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**Anatomy of male and female genitals**

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- **Clitoris**: Erectile tissue found at the top of the labia, covered in a thin membrane just above the opening to the vagina.
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**Diagram of Male and Female Genitals**

[Image of male and female genital anatomy]
To be a confident intimate waxing specialist you also need to be a very good waxing therapist from your Level 2 qualifications. You must understand the types of waxes available and how they behave, how to use wax and the different products your salon or college may use. You must remember that working in the pubic area is much harder than waxing a lower leg and requires a lot of skill to minimise discomfort for the client.

Why is the human body hairy?
As the human body evolved it was extremely hairy all over for warmth; the body also laid down fat deposits to keep warm. Facial hair on men through the ages has been considered a sign of virility, strength and masculinity. Men only started shaving with razors during the twentieth century. In fact, most Edwardian gentlemen had handlebar moustaches or full beards. There has been a big change in fashion towards clean-shaven faces, except of course for the ‘designer stubble’ trend of celebrities. This is also true of intimate waxing – as bikinis and swimwear got smaller and thongs became fashionable, then the trend for hair removal in the pubic region grew, and what started as a bikini shape became the full removal of hair.

Interestingly the women credited with bringing the Brazilian waxing technique to mainstream popularity were seven sisters from Brazil – hence the term – but there is no equivalent term for intimate waxing in Brazil, they just call it cavado meaning ‘to miss peripheral material’. There are more terms for intimate waxing than just Brazilian waxing, and these are covered later.

We still retain hairs for the purpose of warmth and protection. Pubic hair is just a type of hair that grows long and is often coarse in texture. The different types of hair are:
- scalp hair – which protects the head and helps keep in the heat
- eyelashes – which protect the eyes by catching particles that may fall into the eye
- body hair – which protects against heat loss
- underarm and pubic hair – which protect the delicate skin and cushion against friction caused by movement.

Think about it
It is important to be aware of different cultural and religious sensitivities regarding intimate treatments such as waxing. Age, disability and gender must also be considered in your treatment consultation. For example, strict Muslims will not allow themselves to be waxed by a therapist as it is against the teachings of Allah which states that a woman ‘must guard your private parts except from your spouse’.

Hair-growth patterns as well as strength, texture and the amount of hair are also influenced by geography and ethnicity. Refer to Unit B29 Provide electrical epilation treatments, page 520, for detailed information on hair growth.

Equipment and materials for waxing
Look back at your Level 2 waxing unit to remind yourself of the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods of waxing (pages 315–16 in Unit B16 if you took your Level 2 examinations before 2011, pages 407–454 in Unit B6 if after this time).

Experts in intimate waxing generally prefer to use hot wax, as it is easier on difficult contours of the body – and specialist hot wax products are available for intimate waxing, including male waxes.

Clients will almost certainly have used one or more other methods of hair removal before and it is important for both you and them to be aware of the effects that they may have on your waxing treatment, and the advantages and disadvantages of using them between treatments.

For your portfolio
Look up the J sisters who run a spa in New York (they are known as the J sisters as all their Christian names begin with the letter J). They are credited with starting the Brazilian waxing service, as in their own country bikinis were so small that hair removal was considered essential!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of hair removal</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages and effects on waxing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cutting</td>
<td>• Quick</td>
<td>• Short term only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No skill involved</td>
<td>• Blunt regrowth, as hair removed only to skin level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Home treatment</td>
<td>• Risk of cutting the skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No pain involved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Equipment cheap to purchase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Effects on waxing</strong>: Ensure that hairs are long enough to wax effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaving</td>
<td>• Quick</td>
<td>• Suitable for all skin types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No skill involved</td>
<td>• Blunt regrowth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Home treatment</td>
<td>• Risk of skin damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No pain</td>
<td>• Not hygienic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Equipment cheap to purchase</td>
<td>• Short-term only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Only removes surface part of the hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Effects on waxing</strong>: Ensure that hairs are long enough to wax effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweezing</td>
<td>• Precise</td>
<td>• Only suitable for small areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ideal for small areas, i.e. on the face</td>
<td>• Risk of skin damage (bruising or pinching the skin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Equipment cheap to purchase</td>
<td>• Breakage of hair may occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Can be time-consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Not ideal as a DIY treatment for clients who wear glasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Effects on waxing</strong>: Can distort the hair follicle, which may cause the hair to twist and grow inwards. Also if the client wished to have epilation in the future, the hair follicle, where the needle is inserted, can become distorted, therefore epilation would not be a suitable treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threading</td>
<td>• Cheap</td>
<td>• Skill needed to apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No electrical equipment needed</td>
<td>• Possible breakage of the hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Suitable for Mediterranean and Asian clients as this is a common method used for many years in Asian countries</td>
<td><strong>Effects on waxing</strong>: Possible distortion of hair follicle, which may mean the area is unsuitable for epilation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• As effective as tweezing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abrasives (mitts/pumice stones)</td>
<td>• No skill needed</td>
<td>• Hair breakage may occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No specialist equipment needed</td>
<td>• Hair is only removed at skin surface level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Improves the skin texture as dead skin cells are shed (desquamation)</td>
<td>• Could result in skin damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cheap treatment for home use</td>
<td>• Not terribly effective on strong dark hair growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Effects on waxing</strong>: Waxing should not be undertaken directly after using an abrasive glove as the skin could be sensitised; also the hairs should be of a similar length for the treatment to be effective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of hair removal</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages and effects on waxing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Electrical appliances (e.g. electric razors) | • No skill needed  
• Re-usable  
• Ideal for home use  
• Clean and quick | • Only removes surface hairs  
• May damage the skin  
• Some can be expensive  
• Regrowth produced is blunt and growth stubble |
| Depilatory creams | • Cheap  
• Quick  
• Ideal for home use  
• No skill required | • Dissolves hairs by using a chemical reaction at skin level  
• Some products have an unpleasant fragrance  
• Not suitable for allergy-prone or sensitive clients – always carry out a patch test prior to use |
| Bleach | • Little skill involved in application  
• Quick results  
• Suitable for facial hairs  
• Suitable for clients having epilation  
• No distortion of the follicle takes place, so no problems occur if epilation is done at a later date | • Not suitable for all skin types  
• Patch test required  
• Not suitable for large areas, e.g. the legs  
• Regrowth is more noticeable when it does come through  
• Skin irritation can occur |
| Laser treatments (including intense pulsed light) | • Can be used for large or small areas  
• Precise application  
• Suitable for most skin types | • Costly  
• Specialist therapist  
• More than one treatment may be required  
• Can be painful |
| Epilation | • Precise application  
• Salon treatment  
• More than one method available to suit client requirements | • More than one treatment required  
• Not suitable for clients with a needle phobia  
• Can be costly to clear a large area |

**Effects on waxing:** Waxing should only be undertaken if the hairs are of the correct length. The use of electric razors gives the same effect as shaving, i.e. the hair is just cut off at skin level, whereas an epilator removes the hair from the root. As with all waxing treatments the result will depend on the length and the stage of hair growth.

**Effects on waxing:** As with other methods, the hairs will need to grow to a suitable length if waxing is to be effective.

**Effects on waxing:** This method could be used for clients who do not wish to have waxing but are concerned by the darker hair. It can also be used between epilation treatments if the client so wishes, as to wax or tweeze the hairs would be counter-productive to the treatment.

**Effects on waxing:** If a client is having laser treatments on an area, no other method should be used while the course of treatment is being carried out as it can affect the treatment and the skin can become over sensitised.

**Effects on waxing:** Waxing could be used on a client at the commencement of the treatment to attempt to put all the hairs into the first stage of hair growth (anagen) to speed up the treatment process.
Long-term hair removal options

Epilation
Epilation is an advanced treatment at NVQ Level 3. It is permanent removal of the hair and requires considerable skill and training. A small needle is inserted into the hair follicle and a current is passed through the needle. If the hair is in the anagen stage of hair growth, the dermal papilla has the blood supply sealed, preventing a new hair from growing. Epilation is a permanent method of hair removal only if the hair is in the correct growth stage. The client will need to be aware that a number of treatments may be required before all the hair is permanently removed. Epilation of the pubic hair can be expensive but is essential for transgender clients who are undergoing treatment to change sex. Advanced epilation technicians may offer epilation to the scrotal sack and perineum, as referred by a physician prior to surgery to alter the genitals. This ensures the area is permanently hair free.

Laser hair removal
Laser (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation) hair removal is usually carried out in specialist clinics rather than local salons and treatments can be costly. As with epilation, a number of treatments may be required for successful hair removal. The laser treatment involves a laser beam being passed down a handheld instrument, the laser energy is converted into heat, and this heat destroys the hair follicle and dermal papilla preventing the hair from regrowing. You can only treat small areas at a time, which makes it time-consuming. It generates a lot of heat in a concentrated area and it must be cooled, and there is a risk of side effects. The treatment causes a slight stinging sensation, especially in sensitive areas. This has also become more popular for the pubic region as an eventual, permanent solution to hair growth.

IPL
IPL (intense (variable) pulsed light) uses a rapid series of intense light flashes, to create heat to destroy the dermal papilla, these bursts of light ensure the target reaches its aspired temperature with few side effects to the surrounding tissue. The light is selectively absorbed by melanin in the hair and converted to heat, it travels through the hair to the follicle where it breaks down the constituent protein (it loses its natural configuration) effectively destroying the hair and rendering it incapable of regrowing. There are minimal side effects and discomfort, with a significant reduction in bruising, redness or crusting of the skin and no need to apply topical anaesthetic.

Ingredients and composition of waxing products
There are many excellent types of wax available, with various ingredients and different effects. Wax is classed according to its working temperature. The temperatures below are supplied courtesy of Bellitas Ltd, beauty suppliers known for their Strictly Professional waxes. Manufacturers’ instructions will vary with different products, so always refer to the recommended temperatures and heating units for maximum benefit and safety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of wax</th>
<th>Working temperature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hot hard depilatory wax</td>
<td>Works best at 48–68°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm soft depilatory wax</td>
<td>Works best at 40–43°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream depilatory wax</td>
<td>Works best at 35–43°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic wax</td>
<td>Organic wax varies – refer to suppliers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold wax</td>
<td>Needs no heating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ingredients
Look back at your Level 2 waxing unit to remind yourself of the ingredients of wax (page 317 in Unit BT6 if you took your Level 2 examinations before 2011, pages 407–454 in Unit B6 if after this time).

Recent developments in wax formulation have seen companies starting to add essential oils other than the well-known tea-tree oil to their wax recipes. Lavender, for example, has healing and soothing properties and has long been used to treat burns and irritations. Other natural ingredients can also enhance the wax, such as aloe vera, which has soothing, moisturising and healing properties, and is suitable for sensitive skin types.

Types of wax and waxing products
Every wax product is different and requires different care in its application, storage and use. You must know the main ingredients of the wax and understand its properties and how

For your portfolio
The 1999/45/EC Dangerous preparations directive provides information on all precautions, correct handling, storage and first aid measures. Look up the detail to see how this affects your work as an intimate waxer.
to deal with any hazards, spillages or accidents. Hard (hot and film) wax, warm wax, cream wax, organic wax, cold wax, roller waxing, pre-waxing lotion, purified unperfumed powder, after-wax lotion and wax equipment cleaner are all covered in detail in the Level 2 waxing unit and you should revise and refresh your knowledge of each product. (See pages 318–23 in Unit BT6 if you took your Level 2 examinations before 2011, pages 407–454 in Unit B6 if after this time.)

**Other raw ingredients in modern waxes**

In addition to the Level 2 information, you also must know about the following ingredients.

**Colophonium**

This is a brittle, translucent material which becomes sticky when warm and has a pine-like odour. This is a basic ingredient for many waxes to help bind the wax to the hair shaft.

**Glyceryl rosinate**

This is a modified resin with high elasticity produced through mixing Colophonium with glycerine.

**Ethylene/VA copolymer**

This plasticiser provides the elasticity, flexibility and adhesion properties of hot film waxes.

**Cera alba**

White beeswax, found in most hot waxes, provides the setting action needed. The wax can then just peel away from the skin.

**Coloured pigments**

These are used to provide a way of recognising the different wax types and also for cosmetic purposes — for example black wax is thought to look more masculine and therefore more appealing to male clients.
Benefits and effects of waxing

The general benefits and effects of waxing are covered in the Level 2 waxing unit – see pages 323–24 in Unit BT6 if you took your Level 2 examinations before 2011, pages 407–454 in Unit B6 if after this time. Intimate waxing requires specialist waxes which have additional benefits and properties.

Waxes specifically for intimate waxing

There are a wide variety of waxes to choose from, and many companies now offer intimate waxing products and pre- and post-wax lotions. Most professional wax therapists prefer to use a hot film wax, rather than the softer waxes which require fabric or paper strips to aid removal. Hot wax was the only type of wax available many years ago, and went out of fashion with the invention of the lower temperature warm waxes, as hot wax is a specialist skill to apply. However, technology has increased and the new formulations of hot film waxes means that the wax does not go brittle or break off when removed, which was always an obstacle with the older formulations. The plasticisers within the wax help maintain the flexibility (essential for the body contours) which aids easy removal and so means less discomfort for the client. The newer type of wax also has a lower allergy risk for clients as it contains no untreated pine resins, has a much faster setting time, reducing the amount of contact with the skin and is less messy altogether than the older style of hot wax.

Think about it

The Habia Code of Practice for Waxing is an important document that you should read thoroughly and refer to throughout your working life. Every training provider should keep a copy within their salon. It provides guidelines on waxing, sugaring and intimate waxing. It is free for individuals via www.habia.org.

Section 5.3 provides important information on use of single-use items such as spatulas. Before you begin treatment ensure you know the correct procedure and number of items needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hot wax</th>
<th>Skin type</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hot film wax</td>
<td>Normal skin</td>
<td>An all-purpose wax, it contains plasticides, which ensures that it does not become dry and brittle during treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normal to coarse hair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian hot wax</td>
<td>Normal/sensitive skin Fine/normal/coarse hair</td>
<td>Particularly formulated for work on areas where dense or stubborn hair growth is found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate hot film wax</td>
<td>Normal/sensitive skin</td>
<td>A chocolate hot film wax specially formulated for clients with rough, dry or mature skin as it contains coca butter to moisturise and soothe the skin The addition of plasticisers makes it highly flexible, reducing the client’s discomfort and making it easier for the therapist to work with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normal to coarse hair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wax 4 men Warm wax</td>
<td>Normal skin</td>
<td>A strong, masculine-looking wax based on a Colophonium/Glyceryl Rosinate formulation to ensure the successful removal of men’s hair growth Can be used on all areas of the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coarse hair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wax 4 men hot wax</td>
<td>Normal skin</td>
<td>An all-purpose wax, particularly formulated for work on areas that have dense, curly or stubborn hair growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coarse hair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: table courtesy of Hive of Beauty Ltd)

Sugaring

What is it?

Sugaring is the removal of hairs using a paste. This is has been used for hair removal for centuries in Eastern tradition and has become very popular in salons in the west.

Many women prefer this method of hair removal, as they find it less painful than waxing.
What is it made of?
Sugar paste is made up of sugar and water, citric acid (lemon juice) and oil with other natural ingredients. Most manufacturers of sugar paste will not reveal the actual proportion of their secret receipt, so it does have to be purchased by a sugaring wholesaler. It can be used either in a paste or as strip sugar.

Types of sugar paste

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft paste</td>
<td>Soft paste often needs no adjusting, especially if the weather or the therapist’s hands are warm. If the paste becomes wet and sticky, hard paste can be adjusted to absorb moisture. If the paste becomes hard, add steam or water to adjust. Soft paste is ideal to use with strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super soft paste</td>
<td>Super soft paste needs less time to heat and is ideal for use by therapists with cool hands. It often needs no adjusting, especially if the weather or the therapist’s hands are warm. If the paste becomes wet and sticky, hard paste can be adjusted to absorb moisture. If the paste becomes hard, add steam or boiled water to adjust. Super soft paste is also ideal to use with strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm paste</td>
<td>Firm paste is darker in colour and takes longer to heat. It is ideal for therapists with hot hands and in very hot weather. It often needs adjusting, especially if the weather or the therapist’s hands are cool. If the paste becomes hard, adjust with steam or boiled water. Firm paste is not recommended for use with strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard paste</td>
<td>Hard paste is darker in colour and takes longer to heat. It needs adjusting within a few minutes of use and is not recommended for use with strips, as it has to be at a higher temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra hard paste</td>
<td>Extra hard paste is the darkest in colour and takes longest to heat. It needs adjusting within a few minutes of use and is not recommended for use with strips. This paste is mainly used abroad in hot humid climates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What are the hazards?
Sugar paste ingredients are completely natural and form no threat to health in the natural form. However, as the product needs to be heated for use, great care should be taken as burns could occur.

What do I do in the event of an accident?
- In the case of burns, flood the area immediately with cold water for a minimum of ten minutes – 20 minutes for burns to the eyes. Cover with a sterile, non-fluffy dressing and seek medical aid.
- Ingestion – seek medical advice

To avoid accidents, only a therapist who has been fully trained in the art of sugaring should use sugar paste.

How do I handle/store it?
Most suppliers send out their products in firm plastic tubs and the product can be heated in the tub, just as warm wax is. Store in a cool dry place, and keep containers airtight to avoid the product degenerating. The normal shelf life is about twelve months but if looked after, it may last up to two years. The main reason for product deterioration is continual overheating.

Benefits and effects of sugaring
- As the product is made up of natural ingredients and the working temperature of the paste is low, it is very effective on a more sensitive skin and some skins that would react to waxing and would therefore be contra-indicated.
- Clients do say that it feels less painful than warm waxing.
- Sugar paste is water-soluble so less inclined to stick to everything, and very easy to wipe down both the skin and other surfaces.
- Very short hairs can be removed as the paste grips the hairs and not the skin, so there is not the wait for regrowth, as there is with waxing.
- Sugaring is very successful on facial hair as the hairs are pulled cleanly out, and the soft vellus hair is left intact, whilst the coarser hairs are removed – this leaves the face with a natural look to it.

Strip sugaring
Strip sugaring is applied in the same way as warm waxing, and has all the benefits and effects of sugaring, as well as the advantage of being heated in a microwave. Those in mobile businesses favour its use.

Care must be taken when heating in a microwave as the centre of the tub is very much hotter than the outside and there is a risk of burning.
Pre-care for sugaring

Sugaring sticks best to the hairs when there is no grease on the skin, and when the hairs are lengthy enough to grip.

If the client books a sugaring treatment, and she is a regular client, she can be gently reminded of the following. Or if she is a new client these considerations need to be discussed, for maximum results.

24–48 hours before treatment

- No body lotion applied to area.
- No bubble baths.
- No body or baby oil.
- No shaving of the hairs for at least three days before treatment.

It will be too late to explain these considerations to the client once she is in the salon, expecting to be treated.

The receptionists should also be aware of the expected pre-care for sugaring, so that if a new client makes enquiries about sugaring, she can be primed before the salon visit. The last thing a salon needs is an angry or disappointed customer – very bad for business!

The procedure for sugaring depilation

Items required

- Sufficient sugar and heating unit to pre-heat to temperature
- Paper and plastic sheeting to protect couch and surrounding area
- Paper to protect client clothing
- Antiseptic lotion – to clean and degrease skin
- Purified, unperfumed powder – to dry skin and lift hair
- Cotton wool – for application of products
- Scissors – to cut long hairs or strips
- Tweezers – for removal of stubborn hairs
- Spatulas
- Tissues
- Soothing lotion
- Barrier cream
- Orange stick
- Two bins and bin liner
- Disposable gloves and protective apron
- Pillow
- After sugaring lotion
- Cleanser
- Towels
- Strips – muslin, fibre
- Jewellery bowl
- Wipe over whole area with antiseptic lotion.
- Place wax heater at top of trolley and position away from client with no trailing wires.
- Make sure all products required are on the trolley and to hand. This promotes a professional image and saves time.
Preparation of couch
- Plastic sheeting covering bases of couch (dispose of after use)
- Paper tissue over top of sheeting where client will lie
- Couch in an upright position with pillow, towel and tissue for hygiene

Preparation of client
- Check for contra-indications to prevent any harm to client and therapist.
- Remove necessary garments. Place a modesty towel over lap for lower body treatments with protective paper tissue.
- Examine area and note which way hairs are growing for speed and efficiency when applying the paste.
- Explain treatment – to relax client and prepare her for the feeling.
- Wipe the area to be treated with antiseptic.
- Position the client in a comfortable position for the area to be treated.
- Make sure all the surrounding area is protected with paper towel.
- Apply a fine dusting of purified, unperfumed powder to the area lifting the hairs away from the skin as you do so; this dries and lifts hairs so that the sugar can get a firm hold on the hairs and remove them successfully.

Hygiene and sterilisation
Two main points to follow during treatment:
- Wear disposable gloves.
- Dispose of sugar paste after use (do not reuse).
This is due to the possibility of the spread of infections and HIV. Also note the following points.
- As wax is very desquamating, serum may be excreted from the skin, along with small amounts of blood deposits. Students are strongly advised not to touch such areas and to get the client to treat the affected area.
- Disposal of cotton wool, tissues, spatulas and sugar paste should be in a sealed dustbin liner into the main bin. Tweezers and scissors should be sterilised in the autoclave.
- Antiseptic lotions should be used to sanitise the area to be treated, treatment area, trolley and equipment.
- During hot wax treatment, scrape residue wax onto a large spatula – not onto the sides of the machine.

Safety precautions with sugar paste
Certain rules must be followed to ensure client and operator safety.
- During sugaring have folded tissues in one hand to catch drips – to prevent them dropping onto the client.
- Check the machine is in good working order – wires, plugs etc.
- Do not rest the machine on glass. (Trolley)
- Do not heat the wax near flammable materials.
- Do not overheat the paste
- Always test the temperature in relation to the client’s tolerance.
- Protect the client’s clothing.
- Do not reapply immediately after removing a strip.
- Explain procedure thoroughly and warn client of possible skin reaction.
- Explain aftercare procedure.
- Ensure all equipment is clean and sterile.
- Do not leave heating paste unattended.
- Do not heat paste too near client.
- Check contra-indications.
- The therapist should be familiar with machine, e.g. at what temperature paste should melt and be worked with.
- Barrier cream applied to moles and birthmarks.
Testing paste temperature
Once the therapist has tested the paste, test a small amount on the client to check tolerance and also to prepare her for the feeling.

Think about it
The reason for the test is to prevent any burning or discomfort to the client. The paste must also be tested on the therapist during treatment to make sure the temperature hasn’t altered. Test closest to the area you are working upon on the thinnest skin – inner-ankle for leg, inner thigh for intimate waxing and wrist for underarm.

Contra-actions
If a treatment is applied and the area reacts by:
- swelling
- blistering
- developing sore areas
you must stop sugaring.
A normal reaction to sugaring is:
- slight heat build-up in the area
- blotchy red patches
- a little itchiness.
These reactions must only be mild; any other reaction would prevent treatment from either being carried out or being continued.

Application of sugaring
- Take up a manageable amount of paste, and if it needs it, adjust the consistency with a few drops of water, and mould it, to make it elastic enough to use.
- With the spreading technique, massage the paste onto the area with fingers and thumb. The skin will need to be stretched and supported, as for wax application.
- Make sure the edges are thickly enough applied to make a lip for easy removal.
- Remove the paste with a firm flicking motion – without hurting the client.
- Work over the whole area to be treated in a methodical sequence, so that all hairs are removed.
- Using antiseptic wipes and soothing lotion that is compatible with the product used, wipe over the area.
- Provide aftercare and homecare advice – as per waxing.

Suitability of hair-removal products for intimate areas
You can use any of the different hair-removal products for intimate areas, although tweezing is best confined to removing stray hairs after depilation, and epilation only for a small area.

Other methods of hair removal
Other methods of hair removal include hair-removal (depilatory) creams, cutting or clipping (electrical depilation), shaving, tweezing, threading and abrasion. Their use and effects on the waxing process is the same in intimate waxing as it is in for any waxing procedure. (See page 326 in Unit B16 if you took your Level 2 examinations before 2011, pages 407–454 in Unit B6 if after this time.)

What’s available – the range of intimate waxing
Female waxing

Think about it
Sugaring, like hot waxing, is a skill that develops over many hours of practice. All skills that include a certain amount of dexterity take time – after all could anyone learn to play the piano in a day? Practice makes perfect, and treatment times will improve with experience!
Level 3 Beauty Therapy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total treatment time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The classic bikini line</td>
<td>Hair is removed along the normal panty line – to suit client’s needs</td>
<td>15 minutes approx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Brazilian (often called the landing strip)</td>
<td>The landing strip describes it perfectly – it is a thin strip of hair, two or three fingers width on the pubic area. Hair may also be removed from the buttock area if required – always consult with the client as to their preferences</td>
<td>30–45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Playboy (comes from the centrefold models in the magazine of the same name)</td>
<td>This is finer than the Brazilian – only one finger width. Hair is also removed from the labia and buttock area. This look can easily be achieved by using a spatula as a guide – simply place over the middle of the area, hold in place and wax around it. You can then get a straight line which is even, all along the length</td>
<td>30–45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hollywood (often called full bikini wax, the smoothie or the sphinx)</td>
<td>All of the hair is removed from everywhere – the labia, perineum and anus</td>
<td>60 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Californian (often called the triangle or Sicilian)</td>
<td>A triangular shape of hair is left on the pubic area – it may also be coloured with dye. Hair is removed from the labia</td>
<td>30–45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Designer</td>
<td>Hair is removed and a shape or design is left: a foam shape or stencil used or a freehand design can be done, depending upon the skill of the therapist – this may also be coloured with dye</td>
<td>30–45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas</td>
<td>A Brazilian or playboy shape with the addition of diamante adornments</td>
<td>30–45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bollywood</td>
<td>All hair in the anal, buttock and pubic area is removed and the pubic mound is decorated with henna in a decorative fashion</td>
<td>40–45 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Colouring the pubic hair

For all of these shapes and styles there is also the option of organic hair dyes, formulated especially for use on this delicate area, so you can change the hair colour to pink, green, mauve etc. There would be an additional charge for this and it takes longer than the waxing service. You must ensure you use a non-peroxide dye as the pubic region is very sensitive. always perform a patch test before treatment and dye the hair before the waxing service.

Male waxing – a sample of treatments available

- The swimwear line (often called the Speedo effect) – the outline of the swimwear, so tops of thighs and top of swimwear line if the hairline growth is high
- Buttocks – buttock cheeks only
- Buttock crack only
- Full buttocks – cheeks and crack
- Front only – scrotum and penis
- Scrotum only – leaving hair above the penis
- Groin – scrotum and pubic area in a triangle
- Basic Brazilian – the buttocks, scrotal sac and crack
- Full Brazilian – all off, front and back.

Remember to check with individual salons as to the description of waxing, as they may vary. The therapist needs to ask the client quite openly what they wish to have waxed, using the correct anatomical terms, and also inform the client that intimate waxing services will not include other body waxing such as shoulders or back. These will be charged over and above the price of the pubic area. Some salons advertise the sac, back and crack wax as ‘SBC’ and treatment descriptions do vary, so you need to talk the treatment through to meet the expectations of the client.

There are also variations to suit the individual – it can look odd if a male client has all of the pubic area waxed but still has quite a hairy body, or a high pubic hairline, so some men just opt for a tidy up and shape. Also older male clients are opting to have pubic hair colouring using an organic dye which is safe for use on the area, to tone down the grey hairs. As with any treatment a full and open consultation is the only way to establish the client’s treatment needs.
Shaping the hair

Therapists can be quite creative in this area – either by using the pre-formed shapes from suppliers or working freehand, with prior discussion with the client. When shaping the hair, it may be easier to trim the hair with scissors first to a length of approximately half a centimetre so that definition is seen.

Being simple is often the best approach when shaping; try to keep a nice clean shape, such as a heart, diamond, circle or even a cross denoting a kiss. An outline of the desired shape can be drawn on card, cut out and then stencilled onto the pubic mound with an eyebrow pencil, in a colour that is going to show up easily. Coat the hair inside the drawn area with petroleum jelly and brush it into the middle of the shape so you can see a clear outline. The jelly or vaseline stops the wax from adhering to the hairs.

Brush the hair to be removed away from the outline using a disposable mascara wand and wax around the stencil or shape. Get a clear line of wax around the outline first – using another spatula to help keep the lines straight – and then you will clearly see what else has to go.

The remaining shape can then be trimmed or coloured according to client request.

Additional knowledge

Hive (manufacturers of intimate wax products) now offer pre-cut shapes to help with intimate wax sculpting. There are foam cut-outs in a love heart shape or a diamond with a T-string, which the client wears – one shape fits all. It’s easy to use, you simply position the shape and wax around it leaving the hair pattern behind!

Legal and hygiene requirements and codes of practice for waxing

Always check with your Awarding Body regarding the legal requirements for intimate waxing and refer to the Habia website for their guidance. Following guidance is crucial to avoid potential legal implications as there is a risk of the therapist’s behaviour or actions being misinterpreted by the client as sexual assault. It is very important that a professional manner, the correct terminology and language are used and the appropriate conversation and behaviour is taken during the treatments. Staff in any salon should not be forced to carry out these treatments if they feel in any way uncomfortable about doing them and all therapists must be mindful of a client’s cultural and religious beliefs during the treatment so that no embarrassment is ever caused.

Just as clients’ hair growth, hands and feet, body shape and skin type are slightly different and particular to them, so are clients’ genitals. Whilst anatomically as male and female we are all the same design, there may be variations which are highly personal. Medical procedures during childbirth in females and circumcision for males may contribute to differences and this is highly individual and private. It is not your place as a therapist to make any reference to a client’s anatomy, ridicule the client in any way or pass any comments or comparisons, even light-heartedly. Some salons prefer
Provide female and male intimate waxing services

Level 3 Beauty Therapy

The following Acts require all clinical waste to be kept apart from general waste and to be disposed of to a licensed incinerator or landfill site by a licensed company:

- Environmental Protection Act, 1990
- The Controlled Waste Regulations, 1992 (as amended)
- Special Waste Regulations, 1996 (as amended).

Clinical waste includes:

- waste which consists wholly or partly of animal or human tissue
- blood or other body fluids
- swabs or dressings
- syringes or needles.

Refer to Professional basics, ‘You, your client and the law’, page 68, for further information.

All waste products from a waxing treatment must be classed as contaminated waste: there is a possibility that blood spotting will have occurred, especially when carrying out a bikini or underarm wax, and some skin cells will be caught in the waxing process.

Many commercial companies run their own intimate waxing courses and therapists can attend a day’s training to gain a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) certificate. Most companies would not recommend treating a client of less than 16 years of age even with written consent and they do advise you to check with your insurance policy to see if your cover is affected if you do treat a minor. Should you decide to go ahead, when fully qualified, remember that anyone under the age of 16 should be accompanied by an adult who is present throughout the treatment, as a safeguard. For the assessment regulations, always check with your Awarding Body.

Inappropriate client behaviour

As the treatment (especially for males) involves handling of the genitals there is a risk of a physiological reaction of arousal occurring — this should be temporary and will subside quite rapidly. Customers should be pre-warned about this and advised that inappropriate behaviour will not be accepted. Should a client breach the professional status of the treatment and behave in an inappropriate manner, stop the treatment, excuse yourself, and leave the treatment room. Find a senior staff member and report the incident. Do not remain alone with the client and do not ignore the situation — this may be misinterpreted as consent and the situation could get worse. With a colleague, return to the treatment room and ask the client to leave. In a serious breach of etiquette it would be appropriate to call the police.

Personal protective equipment

When carrying out any waxing services there is a dress code and personal protective equipment (PPE) should always be worn — this includes a plastic apron to protect the therapist’s clothing, and new, single-use gloves for every client, with no jewellery worn which may come in contact with the client, and hair tied up and back. Refer back to Professional basics, ‘You, your client and the law’, page 68, for the full rundown on assessment criteria for PPE, and also your legal requirements.

Disposing of hazardous waste

When waxing, you will be dealing with contaminated skin waste products from many different clients. Proper disposal of this waste is extremely important.
Provide female and male intimate waxing services Unit B26/B27

Think about it

It is vital that the waxing waste is not mixed with ordinary rubbish or waste from other treatments. If it is not separated, health inspectors could close down your salon as a health hazard.

Dispose of waste such as wax strips in the correct way

Environmental conditions

The physical setting of the treatment room or area should be well thought out – the client needs to be warm and comfortable as they are disrobing, but the room needs adequate ventilation as the hot wax used can be quite aromatic and strong, especially when a new batch is heated. Lighting should be higher than for a massage treatment, as you do need to see what you are doing but shouldn’t be too bright or clinical to make the client feel embarrassed.

Due to the nature of the waxing treatment it is essential that your client is offered complete privacy and their modesty is protected at all times. The waxing area should be a separate room or cubicle not accessed by the general public and not near a store cupboard or central supply which is required by all staff. Nor is it advisable to be too far away from colleagues and isolated when carrying out intimate waxing, because you could be vulnerable to misinterpretation of the treatment.

Preparing the work environment

Preparation for waxing is an essential part of the beauty therapist’s role, regardless of the treatment being carried out. Good preparation sets the whole atmosphere of any treatment, creating a calm and efficient impression. If the therapist and work area are not prepared, the client will be aware of this, which can detract from the benefits of the treatment. Most wax needs preheating so that the client is not kept waiting. All equipment and materials should be in place to avoid leaving the client alone.

Preparation of the working area

Many salons have designated rooms or areas that are permanently prepared for waxing with heaters and all necessary products never leaving the room.

The golden rule here is to leave everything fully prepared for the next therapist to use. This means replenishing anything that has run low, cleaning and being tidy during the treatment. It would be most off-putting for a new client to see the remains of the previous client’s treatment.

The preparation of the working area should include the following.

- Protective covering for the couch, so that any spillage or residue is easily removed and will not cause permanent damage
Where plastic sheeting is used, paper couch roll should be placed over the top – this prevents cross-infection, as the paper can be replaced easily, it also provides client comfort.

Two waste bins, both with inner liners, should be placed behind or under the couch: one for general waste; one for wax waste – this is for contaminated materials, which will be put into a designated bin for collection by a licensed removal firm for incineration.

The chosen heating unit for the wax type to suit the client’s needs and enough wax product for the area to be treated. Obviously, a lip wax requires a small amount of product, but a full leg wax will mean the heater needs to be quite full. Remember that it may take a full half-hour to heat the wax to a working temperature, so that needs to be the first job of the day. (Many salons keep a heater on all day, in anticipation of clients dropping in without appointments).

- Antiseptic cleaner for the skin, or the manufacturer’s recommended skin cleanser
- Purified, unperfumed powder
- Fabric or paper strips which are compatible with the manufacturer’s requirements for the wax chosen
- Disposable gloves, usually vinyl – refer to your individual professional body’s guidelines for use. Wearing gloves may help to prevent contact dermatitis
- Disposable wooden spatulas or a suitable applicator – again refer to your professional body’s guidelines (there are no spatula requirements for roller waxing, of course)
- Tissues, cotton wool and a jewellery bowl for the client
- A pair of scissors and tweezers in a container soaking in suitable disinfectant to sterilise – the scissors may be required to trim the hair length prior to treatment, and the tweezers to remove the odd stray hair which has escaped the wax
- After-wax lotion or oil
- Aftercare leaflets for the client to take away

You or a client may have a latex allergy so ensure you only use approved gloves such as vinyl or nitrile powder-free gloves. See the information on disposable gloves in Professional basics, ‘You and your client’, page 43.

Prepare your working area carefully

Think about it

The purified, unperfumed powder product you use should be labelled ‘talc-free’ to prevent aggravating respiratory problems. Talc-free products work in the same way as talc when waxing, to lift the hairs and absorb moisture. Talc-free products contain natural ingredients such as cornstarch and kaolin.

Think about it

You should be fully trained in intimate wax techniques before undertaking treatments such as a Hollywood or Brazilian. If an accident occurs when waxing in this delicate area, you may find that your insurance is invalidated.

Checking your position and posture

When waxing, you may find that you get very close to the skin to inspect every pore and hair to make sure you have missed nothing. It is important to remember your posture to prevent back stain and repetitive strain injury. Remember to bend at the knees and keep a straight back.

Ensuring the treatment is cost-effective and minimising wastage

Cost is the price paid for something. It is measured in time, money or energy. Effectiveness means producing a result.

So how does this apply to hair removal? Imagine owning a business and having to pay for all outgoings, equipment, overheads, stock and products, along with staffing and wages.
How can a therapist be economical?

- Only use the amount of product needed. Do not be too quick to do a heavy application of wax — it does not give the best results.
- Do not be wasteful with disposable items. Couch roll can be split in half, cotton wool pads can be split, and smaller tissues can be used rather than ‘man-sized’ ones.
- Give time careful consideration. Time is money and if the treatment times are not planned carefully through the day, there may be a gap of 15 minutes per client. This adds up to an extra hour at the end of the day that could be put to good use, either with vital chores or another cash-paying client.
- Be organised and prepared. Time spent preparing the working area not only gives a professional appearance, it also saves time.
- Do not indulge in false economies. Paying to have equipment maintained and repaired makes good financial sense. If the equipment starts to fail and the therapist is unable to offer some treatments because of it, revenue may be lost. Bad advertising through word of mouth will also mean lost revenue.
- Invest in good labour-saving equipment. For example, borrowing an old machine to wash all the towels may seem to cut costs, but an industrial washing machine will have low maintenance costs.
- Work out overhead costs on a realistic basis, and try to gear your prices to that figure. Work out how many hours you work a week.
- Be wary of both consultation and aftercare times. Some clients love to chat, and while the therapist wants to give a quality treatment, time can slip away, and that is expensive. Giving the client a leaflet is a good time-saving technique, and the client can take it away to refer to.
- Do some research and find out what sort of prices the competition asks for waxing treatments. The salon may offer both warm and hot wax. Adjust your prices so they are about the same — they should be not so expensive that custom is lost but not so cheap that clients think there is a catch.

Leaving the work area and equipment suitable for further treatments

After the client has left the salon, it is time to go back to your workstation to clear up. Waxing is a notoriously messy business, especially in your early training. You will probably have dripped wax down the side of the pot and on to the floor while trying to get it from the pot to the area to be waxed. You may also have flicked some of it on to yourself. Some of this is to be expected when you first start, but your technique must get cleaner as you progress.

To avoid dripping wax on to the floor, fold up a tissue in your free hand and hold it underneath the hand holding the spatula to catch any drips. This is much easier than trying to pick wax off the floor — it never comes off completely once it has set.

Always wear a protective apron — it is much easier to throw away a plastic apron than to get wax off a new overall.

Think about your method of work. Could you have been tidier as you went along? Unless the client is the last one of the day, you will not have the luxury of plenty of time to clean and tidy the area. Get into the habit of putting all waste straight into the bin, which should be beside you. Bad habits soon form, so do not put bits and pieces on the side of the trolley, or worse still, on the couch. If your next client is in straight away, you could be in trouble with treatment timing if you have to spend a long time tidying and preparing for your next treatment.

Consult, plan and prepare for waxing services with clients

In this section you will learn about:
- consultation techniques
- conducting a skin sensitivity test
- contra-indications to treatment
- client records
- preparing the client for treatment
- pre-wax application products
- maintaining client modesty.
Consultation techniques

It is important that you have a professional and thorough consultation with the client prior to the treatment, due to the nature of the treatment, it will be more intimate than usual. Make sure it is carried out in a private room, and the client feels able to ask questions without fear of embarrassment. The treatment should be explained in full – the hot wax does feel warmer than usual on the skin, it is an awkward area of the body to get to and the client will be placed in quite exposed positioning, although privacy will be respected where possible. Because of the area to be treated the contra-indications are also of a personal nature and include sexually transmitted diseases, haemorrhoids and urinary infections – so these questions have to be asked at consultation. It is important that you recommend the client seeks medical advice and you do not carry out the treatment if there is a possibility that any of the contra-indications are present.

The client will need a patch test prior to treatment and always gain written permission to carry out the treatment.

Conducting a skin sensitivity test

A sensitivity test should be carried out on a clean, dry area of skin, usually on the forearm as this is hair-free. Consult with your own Awarding Body and professional therapies federation, as they may insist you carry out a sensitivity test on the area you are treating. The test should always be carried out at least 24 hours prior to the treatment and recorded on the client record card.

Having heated the correct type of wax to be used for the client, test it on yourself for the correct temperature, then apply a small circle of wax to the client’s forearm. Remove as for hair removal and note any immediate reaction on the skin.

Put the details on to the client’s record card and ask them to monitor the result for the next 24–48 hours. Any adverse reaction such as swelling, redness, irritation or worse, would indicate an allergy to the wax and the treatment cannot go ahead.

You must be tactful when informing the client that he/she is not suitable for treatment if there is an adverse reaction to the patch test. Be discreet, too, and tell them somewhere private, rather than in the middle of reception where everyone can hear.

Think about it

If a reaction occurs, there will be noticeable redness in the area of the patch test, which may also be itchy. This will indicate either that the wax type is unsuitable for the client, or that waxing cannot take place at all.

Think about it

Not all methods of hair removal are suitable for all clients. A full consultation will be needed to establish which method is suitable and agreeable to you both. Remember a sensitivity test would be advisable to people with sensitive skin.

Contra-indications to treatment

Prior to any waxing treatment, you must ensure the area is free from any contra-indication that could possibly prevent the treatment or mean you may have to adapt it. This is especially important when working on such delicate intimate areas.

General contra-indications

- Recent scar tissue
- Hypersensitive skin
- Cuts or abrasions
- Bruising in or around the area to be treated
- Allergy to any products you will be using (such as rosin, found in sticking plasters and wax)
- Blood diseases (HIV, hepatitis)
- Use of skin-thinning drugs such as Retin A or Accutane
- Diabetes
- Defective circulation
- Inflamed or aggravated skin

Some conditions, such as moles, infected ingrowing hairs and skin tags, will mean the treatment may need adapting and you would avoid the area.
Yasmin’s story

At my salon, my manager put intimate waxing treatments on special offer as a promotion and it really worked. For two months my column was nearly all intimate waxing appointments and at one point I was doing fourteen a day! It was a really steep learning curve but the more I did, the more comfortable I became with them. The only thing that I’d never had to deal with was a client who hadn’t been able to prepare for the treatment hygienically – I was so worried that it would just be so embarrassing. Most of my clients were so self-conscious about having their intimate areas exposed that they would come to the salon having just been in the shower or bath.

However, one day my worst fear was realised when a client came in straight from a long day at work. She apologised and I told her not worry and asked her to prepare for her treatment as normal. However, when I pulled back her modesty towel I realised her personal hygiene was not very good and decided I was not prepared to work on the area, even after she’d used a cleaning wipe. I really didn’t want to embarrass my client so I was very professional and told her that I thought it would be best if we rescheduled her appointment for a time when she would have enough time beforehand to shower or bathe so I would have a clean area to work with.

I saw her blush so I was quick to reassure her – I told a white lie and said it happens all the time. I explained that I was looking forward to seeing her again and booked her another appointment. It also gave me a chance to talk about her home care and aftercare, wearing cotton underwear, what to avoid and so on. When she left, she seemed happier and more reassured. It’s the only time it’s ever happened and I know if it ever happens again, I’ll handle it with confidence and will know what to say.

Effects for the therapist:
- Inadequate preparation can cause initial embarrassment
- It is important to be professional when dealing with clients, particularly for treatments where the client is more exposed and may already be feeling uncomfortable
- Understand that refusing treatment doesn’t mean losing the client

Effects for the client:
- Inadequate preparation can cause initial embarrassment
- It is very important that clients are given all the information they need on how to prepare for a treatment and that they understand the importance of following it
- If the therapist takes control of the situation, they will minimise any awkwardness for the client and inspire confidence and respect
Contra-indications specific to intimate waxing
- Urine infection
- Sexually transmitted infection
- Intimate piercings – should be removed prior to waxing
- Haemorrhoids
- Recent scar tissue from childbirth (if the perineum has been torn/cut) or from recent surgery
- Irritated or inflamed skin
- Pubic lice
- Contagious skin diseases
- Oedema in the area

All of these conditions could be made worse if the treatment was to go ahead, or the condition could be spread to others. If you are in any doubt about whether or not you should go ahead with the treatment, do not be afraid to ask your manager for advice and be open about informing the client that they should seek medical advice of any condition you are not sure about.

In the case of infection, again recommend that the client sees their doctor and clears the infection prior to treatment. Do encourage the client to ask questions but remember you are not medically trained and can only refer the client to their own GP, not offer an opinion on what may be wrong.

Client records
When the treatment procedure and details have been explained to the client, their expectations discussed, and the patch test and the contra-indication checklist is fine, ensure you note everything on the client record card and gain written consent to carry out the treatment.

Note any contra-actions, reaction and client preferences for products, any homecare products sold and any other treatment linked to the intimate waxing such as a back wax or legs on the record card. Remember that it may not be you who treats the client the next time they come into the salon, so their record card should be full and concise, with clear, legible handwriting.

Preparing the client for treatment
- Always ask the client to shower prior to treatment and if they cannot come directly from home then have personal hygiene wipes available for cleansing of the area – to be done by the client.
- Ideally, ask the client to use some exfoliant treatment – either product or mitt in the bath or shower, on the area to be waxed in the few days prior to their appointment. Sloughing off the dead skin cells means that the wax will adhere to the hairs better and not on the dead skin cells sitting on the surface. This also helps prevent ingrowing hairs from occurring.
- Encourage the client not to use any other form of hair removal before the appointment, such as shaving or cream removal, as the hairs really need to be half a centimetre long for a clean finish – they will be disappointed with the results if hairs are too short.
- Recommend the client wears clean underwear and, if the back is to be waxed, a cotton T-shirt so the area is not too hot and sweaty prior to treatment. After treatment they will need clothing that is roomy enough for air to circulate, so the area is kept cool.
- Let them know that they should not sunbathe prior to treatment.
- If the client is aware that their skin gets highly irritated by normal waxing, they could speak to their GP about anti-histamine medication.

Pre-wax application products
As for any other treatment, prior to intimate waxing you must ensure that the area is correctly prepared and sterilised, because:
- you are working with a sensitive area that is prone to infection like any bodily orifice
- the hair can be very strong and you must ensure you get a good grasp on the hairs to avoid any pulling that will cause the client great distress in such a touch-sensitive area.

There are some very good pre-wax antiseptic products on the market to help clean and make the area as hygienic as possible. Pre-wax spray may contain lemon and/or tea tree essential oils, which can be used on all areas of the body. A pre-wax gel may contain clove oil and willow bark which will help the hair lift away from the skin and therefore waxing is made easier. Wipes are also available with the same family of ingredients – they should all prepare and sterilise

Think about it
Discuss their menstrual cycle with your female clients and the timing of their intimate waxing appointment. Prior to a period, the skin is extra sensitive and the treatment may be more painful than usual. If the client has her period, for hygiene and comfort purposes recommend a postponement of the treatment until afterwards.
the areas prior to waxing. Purified un-fragranced talc should also be applied, which will absorb any oils on the hair shaft and allow the wax to grip better, all around the hair shaft, rather than on just one side. This means better adhesion and cleaner removal – which is also less painful and avoids you having to go over the areas again.

**Maintaining client modesty**

Always protect your client modesty where possible – intimate waxing by its very nature is not very dignified, and the client should be made to feel comfortable and marginally in control of their exposure. If not doing a full intimate wax, then offer the client disposable pants which allow you to get a clear panty line without going underneath. When starting the treatment, offer a hand towel over the lap, give the client space to get undressed and give the client a tissue to hold in case they need to offer assistance in pulling the skin taut – this offers a bit of comfort to the client, as well. Ensure the room is private and not in the main traffic area, and that personal details are not discussed in a public arena, such as reception.

**Remove unwanted hair**

- methods of application
- female intimate waxing
- male intimate waxing
- finishing the treatment
- suitable homecare products
- contra-actions.

Now you are ready to begin the treatment. Talk to your client – often they will be quite nervous about having intimate waxing done and it is your job as a therapist to make them comfortable. Being confident and clear with your directions will help them feel as though you are in total control of a very personal situation.

- Each salon and spa will have their own policy on whether undergarments are to be left on or replaced with disposable pants; however, you may find it easier to work by removing them all together.

- Always use the correct pre-wax application products prior to waxing, following the manufacturer’s instructions for use, and ensure the area is clean and wiped with antiseptic or other suitable skin cleanser.

- Have some cleansing wipes in your treatment room for client use.

- Explain to your client that you would like them to remove all clothing from their bottom half, including pants, invite them to freshen up with a wet wipe (indicate where the wipes are situated) and then to lie face-up on the couch, placing a small towel over their lap. Then leave the room, allowing them to get themselves ready. After a few minutes, knock and ask your client if you may return to the room and enter.

**Methods of application**

- The most common medium used in intimate waxing is hot wax. It is perfect for use on terminal hair, allowing you to apply a thick layer that ensures a firm grasp of the hair, and avoids the complications of using strips that can be awkward on such a fiddly area.

- For female waxing it is often kindest to begin at the bikini line. It allows the client to ease into the treatment as it is a common area to have exposed and waxed, it is also the least sensitive and therefore the least painful, and this avoids shock and feelings of unease.
Identify the area you are going to apply wax to, usually the size of your thumb, and apply the wax with the tip of the spatula going against the hair growth, and back down in a figure of eight (almost like you are buttering toast). You can be quite firm against the skin to ensure you have lifted all the hairs from the skin and they are all caught up in the wax. You must make sure the area of wax is thick enough so that when you pull, it comes off in one go. If it is too thinly spread it will split and peel, leaving very thin strips on the skin. Wait for a few seconds for the wax to dry, when you can pat it without wax sticking to your hand, you can remove it.

Like all waxing, after much practice your treatment time will become quicker and the faster the action, the less painful for the client.

Correct temperature

Hot wax should be of a gooey consistency, easily spreadable into a thick figure of eight. If the wax is too hot, not only will you burn your client but you will not get enough onto the hair. When the wax is the same consistency as thick honey, test the temperature on yourself first on the inside of your wrist. This is an especially sensitive area, so will give you a clearer indication of how it would feel to the client. Remember you are waxing a very sensitive area and so must ensure the wax is not too hot.

Test the wax on yourself and then on the client so you both agree that the temperature is fine for use and the client is not at risk from burning.

When your client is ready, move the towel exposing one side, wipe the area with a sterilising lotion or surgical spirit and blot with a tissue. When the area is clean and dry, apply pre-wax purified, unperfumed powder to the area using a cotton round, lifting the hair away from the skin as you go. This will allow the wax to grip to the hair, ensuring a clean removal with no tugging, it will also protect the delicate skin against the wax and allow you to determine the direction of hair growth.

If a client has particularly long hair that you feel may get caught in the wax, use small scissors or, if very careful, an electrical trimmer to take down the length.

Female intimate waxing

It is easiest if the client is lying flat on the bed, rather than semi-reclining, as this allows the underneath tissue to be slightly more taut, but you must be guided by your client and their comfort.

Expose one side of the area before removing the towel, ask your client to bend one knee so that the foot is touching the opposite knee and the bent leg is flat to the couch. Then lift the towel away and fold it over, this will ensure your client doesn’t feel entirely exposed. When working on the other side, unfold the towel so it covers the entire lap again, straighten your client’s leg, walk round and repeat on the other side.

At this point it is important you feel comfortable with performing the treatment. Although most clients will feel so self-conscious they will be very clean and washed, you may come across a client who is unaware how intimate the waxing can be and comes less than prepared. If you feel for hygiene reasons you will not be able to go ahead with the treatment, simply cover your client again and explain very clearly and professionally that you would like them to rebook the appointment, when it’s a more convenient time for them to have a bath or shower immediately before the appointment. Do not make your client feel embarrassed and assure them you would like to see them again to avoid losing their custom.

If you are happy to go ahead, ask your client what it is exactly they want removed, whilst you prepare the skin. There are many different names for different shapes – the Hollywood, Brazilian and Vegas – but each client/spa/therapist will have a different idea as to what they mean, so be sure you are clear as to exactly what they want removed. Some clients may even wish to show you.

Think about it

Do not use mineral oils prior to waxing as they will prevent the wax from sticking to the hair shaft. This is why powder is preferable. However many pre-wax treatment sprays contain essential oils such as lemon, tea tree or clove oil, which have antiseptic properties to prepare the skin. After the waxing treatment, oils are acceptable to soothe the skin and remove any wax residue. Refer to your manufacturer’s recommendations for after-wax oil treatments – there are a variety of products available.

Key terms

Essential oil – natural essence, in the form of oil, that is extracted from plants, herbs, flowers, leaves, berries, fruit, bark, resin, seeds, wood, roots or grasses.
Male intimate waxing

Supporting the skin

- Apply the wax to a small section, thick enough to coat the area and with a thick rim to aid removal. When removing the wax you will pull against the hair growth, so you must ensure you have a good ‘lip’ or edge to pull, so you have a good enough hold to remove it quickly. Once you are happy with the wax application, ask your client to help you stretch the area. One hand should be at the top of the hair pulling upward and the other in the crease of the hip pulling outward; you will then place a hand directly in front of the wax. Confident that the skin is taut in every direction, flick the lip until you have enough free edge to grasp and whip the wax off quickly and strongly.

- Move your client’s hands as you move around the area making sure that her two hands and your supporting hand make a triangle around the area you are about to wax, as this will ensure the skin is taut from every angle. If your client is unable to help you stretch, try to keep the skin as tight as you can.

- As you work around the area, you may wish to move your client into a different position to ensure the skin is tight. Asking your client to lift her knee to her chest and pulling it into her body will keep the area around her anus taut and if you are finding it difficult to reach an area, your client on all fours will allow easy access.

- As long as you instruct your client to pull with you so the skin is always taut, and you apply a thick enough layer with a good tip for grip, you will drastically minimise discomfort.

- It is easiest for male waxing to start with the client on all fours, with the bed flat, and the client should keep a T-shirt on the upper body for warmth. Socks may be kept on too, but do be careful not to drip or flick any wax onto them by accident. Remember that the client is facing away from you, so always talk through every action and engage with them – they cannot see what you are doing and sudden application will make them jump!

- Ask the client to use one hand or arm to steady himself and the other hand to support all of his genitals, pulling them upwards and slightly towards his stomach. This will stretch the skin and allow better application and removal.

- Test the wax on yourself on the inner wrist, then do a small patch test on the client on the inner thigh to ensure the temperature is comfortable.
In small sections apply and remove hairs from the buttocks and rectal area – depending upon the client’s agreed treatment plan. Work inwards to the back of the scrotum as far as you can go, all the while the client is stretching the skin.

Ask the client to turn over and lie flat on his back, with legs open so that you can access the front of the scrotum and the base of the penis. The client should again support the genitals and pull upwards on the penis to keep the skin as taut as possible.

In this position you will be able to complete the waxing of the inner thigh, scrotum and penis. Do remember you want a nice clean line along the top of the thigh. If the client is not also having a leg wax, it can look odd if the inner thigh line is not neat.

Finishing the treatment

- When you have finished waxing, remove any stray hairs with tweezers.
- Provide a mirror and ask that the client checks the area and is happy with the result, and that it meets the agreed treatment plan.
- Apply after-wax lotion on cotton wool and ask the client to apply this to the whole area – ensuring the client’s hands are clean. Always use the manufacturer’s recommended after-wax products instead of your own essential-oil mix, as a professionally diluted product is less likely to cause irritation on sensitive skin.
- Cover the client with the lap towel and leave while they get dressed.
- Return and talk through immediate and long-term aftercare.

Think about it

The reason we have pubic hair is to protect the area against infection and to keep warmth and moisture in. That’s why hair growth patterns are nearly always towards the vagina, to create a barrier.

When looking at the shape of the hair growth on a female, it looks similar to a martini glass, the glass being the bikini area above the pubic bone, the stem being the hair growing on the external labia, and the bottom of the glass the anus.

As everybody is different you will see no two growth patterns the same, however, at the top of the pubic bone, the bikini area, the hair often grows inward and down towards the base of the pubic bone. At the top of the external labia, above the hood, is where it is most painful, as it is often where the hair is the thickest. It tends to grow downwards toward the anus. The hair between the vagina and anus will often grow upwards towards the vagina, and around the anus, where the hair is wispy, it usually grows inwards.
Suitable homecare products

When you return to your client in the treatment room, explain that as this is a sensitive area of the body where there is thick hair growth, there is a greater risk of having ingrowing hairs and ideally they should exfoliate the area the next day and then twice a week thereafter to avoid dead skin preventing new hair from breaking through the epidermis. Some salons and spas offer a retail product that contains AHAs to thin hair growth and prevent ingrown hairs; this is an ideal retailing opportunity.

Advise your client to leave the area well alone overnight and to avoid hot baths or showers until the area has calmed down. A follow-up appointment will be needed in around four to six weeks.

Contra-actions

It is very common for your client to get a strong erythema during this treatment and it is also usual for the hair follicles to bleed when the client has thick pubic hair growth. You must ensure you do not re-wax any area that bleeds and dispose of any tissue or cotton that you use to clean the area in the appropriate bin. Do not touch a bleeding area with ungloved hands — this would leave you open to possible cross-contamination. If spatulas are used and blood spotting occurs they should be disposed of at once and fresh ones used. All waste should be disposed of in the contaminated yellow sack, indicating it is contaminated waste — and this includes the wet wipes or antiseptic wipes used.

Reactions to intimate waxing vary from person to person and may be slight or pronounced and include:
- bruising
- blood spots
- abrasions to the delicate skin
- broken hairs
- allergic reactions
- erythema
- diminished regrowth
- burnt skin — if the wax is too hot

If you do bruise or burn the client it is important to share this information so that they are prepared and ready to let it heal. Like anywhere else on the body it will fade and heal — but the genital area is tender, as it takes the body’s weight when sitting down. If you ignore the reactions, the client will have no faith in your professional ability and you may lose them as a client.

To help counteract these reactions make sure the client fully understands the immediate and long-term aftercare, which is crucial for the healing and calming of the skin, this should be stressed and if possible given in written (leaflet) form for the client to take away. The area should be kept cool and clean, with loose clothes that allow air to circulate, and soothing lotion applied regularly. Many companies make their own cool-down, post-wax lotions which can also be used in the case of burns or bruising. A cool compress or ice will also help cool down the area. Reassure the client that they should return to the salon immediately for professional advice if they are concerned about any contra-actions not subsiding (see ‘Provide aftercare advice’ below).

Provide aftercare advice

If you can give the client written aftercare advice, so much the better, but ensure you talk through the main points they need to be aware of as well.

- The skin must be kept clean for 24 hours after the treatment.
- Do not touch the area with unclean hands and wash hands before applying any soothing or antiseptic cream.
- Take care to be extra clean after going to the toilet; recommend using a moist toilet wipe.
- Do not use any fragranced deodorants, sprays or powders.
- Do not engage in sexual activity for at least 24 hours.
- Avoid tight underwear and tight clothes as they cause friction.
- Avoid heat on the area, including saunas, hot tubs and steam rooms, hot baths and showers.
- Only wash with lukewarm water, as heat will cause further irritation — and avoid perfumed bathing additives or bubble baths.
- No tanning, sunbeds, fake tanning or sunbathing for at least 24 hours.
- No gym workouts or sports, which would increase perspiration in the area, for at least 24 hours.
- Wear clean underwear — cotton is best; nylon or other man-made fibres may cause irritation.
- Antibacterial wash or salt in a cool bath will help the area to heal and prevent infection.
- Scrub the area the next day with a loofah or exfoliating mitt and then three times a week to avoid ingrown hairs...
Check your knowledge

1. Which of the following is **not** a contra-indication to treatment?
   a) Recent scar tissue
   b) Bruising
   c) Skin tag
   d) Urine infection

2. Which of these conditions would restrict treatment?
   a) Pubic lice
   b) Heat rash
   c) Sunburn
   d) Moles

3. Why is hot wax considered ideal for use in an intimate treatment?
   a) It doesn’t matter how long the hair is.
   b) It’s cheaper than other waxes.
   c) It’s not as painful as other waxing methods.
   d) It is easier to apply and remove in contoured areas.

4. The melting point of hot wax is:
   a) 38°C
   b) 48°C
   c) 58°C
   d) 68°C.

5. In which direction should hot wax be applied?
   a) With the hair growth
   b) Against the hair growth
   c) In any direction
   d) Always towards the heart

6. Pubic hair is classed as:
   a)vellus hair
   b) club hair
   c) terminal hair
   d) lanugo hair.

7. If the hairs are too long for treatment the best course of action is to:
   a) shave them
   b) tweeze them
   c) trim them
   d) curl them.

8. Purified, unperfumed powder products are used to:
   a) make the skin smell nice
   b) provide a coating for the wax to stick to
   c) make the hairs stand away from the skin
   d) make the skin white.

9. After-wax lotion helps:
   a) soothe the skin
   b) stop the area going pink
   c) make the skin smell nice
   d) calm the client down.

10. A patch test must always be carried out, to:
    a) try out the heat of the wax on the client
    b) see if the client is sore
    c) let the client know it hurts
    d) give the client a bald patch on her arm.

**Recommendations for the therapist**

- Keep client record cards up to date and accurate — note on the next visit what the healing time was for the client and if they had any long-term problems.
- Book a follow-up appointment to keep the area maintained.
- If the client is going on holiday, ideally book them in a week before they go — in case of any adverse reactions and because they should avoid sunbathing immediately after treatment. If this isn’t possible and the client is going on holiday immediately after treatment, recommend the use of a full sun block on the area for at least 24–48 hours.

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**Level 3 Beauty Therapy**

**Provide female and male intimate waxing services**
Getting ready for assessment

You are not allowed any simulation within this unit and you must practically demonstrate in your everyday work that you have met the Standards for providing intimate waxing treatments.

Your assessor will observe your performance on at least four separate occasions, each time on different clients and each one demonstrating a different service requirement. All four female waxing services should be demonstrated, and four out of the five male services.

You should use two out of the three products within your ranges and carry out a full and professional treatment.

From the ranges you must show that you have:

- used all consultation techniques
- dealt with all the client characteristics
- dealt with at least one of the necessary actions
- used two of hot wax, warm wax and sugar paste
- covered all treatment areas
- given all types of advice.

Be confident and well practised before you begin your assessments with intimate waxing. Practise with hot wax application or sugaring paste on easier areas such as legs to begin with, so that you master the technique and build up your confidence. Then graduate to underarms, which are a slightly less even surface to work upon, and then begin with bikini lines before embarking on a full intimate treatment. Get to know your products; how to handle the wax/sugar paste with ease and how to apply and remove it quickly — this is key before you tackle the difficult terrain of the genitals. When you first begin it is easier to work on complete strangers than it is to ask family or friends to model for you!
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