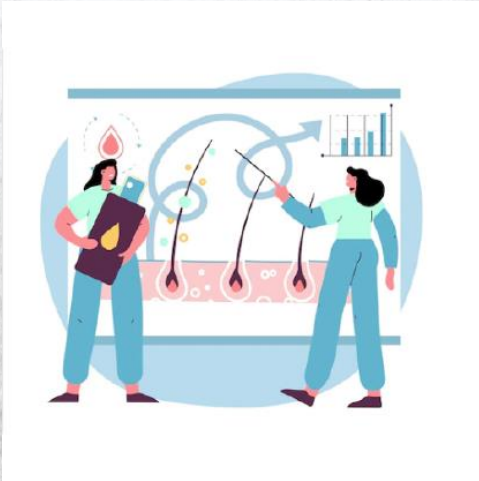


Excessive hair growth (hirsutism)



Hirsutism is where women have thick, dark hair on their face, neck, chest, tummy, lower back, buttocks or thighs, the reason for this hair growth is hormones called androgens.

Symptoms:

Hirsutism is thick, dark body hair, appearing on the body where women don't usually have hair. With high androgen levels that cause hirsutism, other symptoms appear like:

- Deepening voice
- Balding
- Acne
- Decreased breast size
- Increased muscle mass



When you should visit the doctor:

If the woman has so much hair that is causing a problem for her, she should visit the doctor because it can be a symptom of another underlying problem, the woman can be referred to a dermatologist or an endocrinologist.

Causes:

- Hirsutism is linked to hormones called androgens. It can happen if the level of these hormones increases or if your body becomes more sensitive to them.
- The most common cause is polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). This is a condition affecting the ovaries that can also cause symptoms such as acne and irregular periods.
- Congenital adrenal hyperplasia: This inherited condition is characterized by abnormal production of steroid hormones, including cortisol and androgen

Diagnosis:

Diagnosis is through checking certain hormones in blood, including testosterone or testosterone-like hormones, it might help determine whether elevated androgen levels are causing your hirsutism.

The doctor might also examine the abdomen and do a pelvic exam to look for masses that could indicate a tumor.



Treatment:

- If the patient is overweight, losing weight can help balance the hormones.
- a prescription cream to slow hair growth on the face
- taking a contraceptive pill if you've not been through the menopause yet – this can help control hormone levels
- Laser hair removal which is a cosmetic procedure that uses a powerful laser or intense pulsed light (IPL) to remove unwanted hair, the light source heats and destroys hair follicles in the skin, which disrupts hair growth.

