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Awareness, Knowledge and Practices of Laser Hair Removal (LHR) among people visiting special clinic in Palestine: Cross sectional study

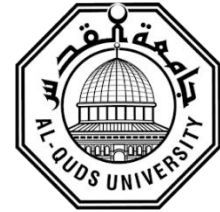
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Background: Excess body and facial hair, particularly in women, can cause substantial psychological and social distress, including emotional strain, anxiety, and depression, as well as lowered self-esteem and academic and occupational performance. Shaving, waxing, plucking, and depilatory treatments are among methods for eliminating unwanted hair. However, these methods are time-consuming, unsuccessful, and may cause pain. In addition, they can cause skin irritation, infection, allergic or irritant dermatitis, and scarring. Despite the well-known benefits of laser hair removal (LHR), there are many misconceptions and negative attitudes among the public. These include fear of pain, burns, scars, damage to the eyes and internal organs, skin cancer, and changes in skin tone and texture.

Objective: To assess the awareness, Knowledge and Practices of Laser Hair Removal (LHR) among attendees in Palestine.

Method: A cross-sectional study was conducted over two months from February to April 2024 using a questionnaire. The questionnaire, in Arabic, was distributed to any female in the West bank aged 18 or more using social media platforms. The questionnaire included demographic characteristics, general lifestyle (7 items), knowledge (17 items), and practices (7 items). The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 27.0. Qualitative data was expressed in frequency and percentages, whereas continuous variables were represented by the mean (standard



deviation) for continuous variables and percentage for categorical variables. The study performed linear regression analysis to identify the variables affecting customers' awareness of the active components in skin-whitening products and the potential negative effects of using them.

Results: Out of 500 questionnaires issued, 454 were completed (response rate = 90.8). The study group consisted of 97.8% females and 2.2% men. 78.4% (n=356) were between 18 and 30 years old, 63.9% were unmarried, 70.7% had a university degree, 44.3% used LHR, and 35.0% were satisfied with the findings. Regarding LHR understanding, 36.8% (74/201) believe that hormone workups are required before LHR. When asked who should perform LHR, 21.5% asked doctors, while 43.9% said trained nurses. However, there are large variances in LHR knowledge percentages dependent on monthly income, with 39.5% of the ratio not using it due to its high cost. Regarding LHR safety, 65.2%, 46.2%, and 74.7% of individuals believe it is unsafe during pregnancy, lactation, or for children, respectively. Only about 16.3% of participants believe that LHR may cause cancer in the future.

Conclusions: This study noted a lack of knowledge, along with various misconceptions, of LHR was noted among women attending special clinics in Palestine, especially in individuals who had not used LHR before.

Keyword: Laser hair removal, colorism, skin ton0065, knowledge, attitude, practice.