

The Medical Roundup

by

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Superfluous Hair

Hundreds of women ask me what to do about superfluous hair. To those who ask if there



is a medicine they can take, I have to say I know of none. Rarely does the hairiness seem to be due to any defect in the glands of internal secretion, and hence an endocrinologist can seldom help. Some of the most beautiful young women I have seen in the office have been distressed by great hairiness, particularly of the legs and thighs and breasts.

There are some people among whom extreme hairiness is much commoner than in others. I have seen Syrian men whose back was covered with a heavy coat of hair, such as would never be seen on a Chinese. I suspect that if a girl has a very hairy father, she may inherit such a strong tendency to hairiness that even her strong ovaries cannot hold it down.

Usually I have advised hairy women to shave every few days. It is the cheapest and simplest way of handling the situation. But thousands of the women object to shaving; first, because they feel that this implies masculinity, and that distresses them. Second, they have an idea—long ago exploded, but still universally believed in—that shaving will make the hair coarse. As I tell women, I have been shaving for 58 years and the hair on my face is still fine in texture.

When women have asked me about having their hair removed by electrolysis I have usually advised against it, partly because of the expense involved, partly because of the time needed for removing all hair from any large area of the body, and partly for fear that someone not expert in the use of the electric needle might destroy too many follicles in one small area and thereby cause scarring and pitting.

Never Got Answer
 When I would say this in a column, electrologists would write to tell me that, with their new method, they did not fear scarring. Unfortunately, when I would write asking for information as to exactly what an electrologist does and what type of new apparatus is used, and how much hair can ordinarily be removed in this way, I never got an answer.

Naturally, then, I was pleased when recently the Electrologists Association of California sent their friendly secretary, Mr. George Oliver, to see me and to demonstrate the modern method of removing hair. He told me that this Association has a school in which students are taught to remove hair. They receive 500 hours of instruction, and then must pass an examination. So far, only 13 states have set up standards for the licensing of electrologists.

Mr. Oliver first discussed with me the removal of hair with the needle and the formerly-used constant current. This current produces a powerful chemical, which can destroy the follicle of the hair, granting that the needle

is in the follicle and not outside of it.

With the new method, a high-frequency current is used. This heats a tiny needle and thereby destroys the follicle.

Must Develop Sixth Sense

In all this work the operator has to develop a sixth sense that will tell him in which direction the follicle is growing under the skin. If his needle goes in the wrong place, the hair will grow again. The current is left on for only a few seconds. With this method an expert operator can remove the hair from several square inches in an hour—the size of the area depending, of course, on the number of hairs in the area, and on the characteristics of these hairs. In some cases the operator has to spend many hours on a job, but eventually he for she can remove all hair on the face or breasts or thighs. Since the charge is often \$10 an hour, the expense to the patient may be quite an item.

Fortunately, in most cases, there is not much pain involved. Usually what the person feels is something like a mosquito bite. As a person contemplating treatment must realize, no matter how skillful an operator is, he cannot always insert his needle in the right place. This means that, after some weeks, the person may have to return for a second try at the hairs that have grown back. Many electrologists agree that if one cannot afford to have the hair follicles all destroyed, shaving is best. It does not injure the follicles as tweezing and waxing does. The electrologists do not approve of depilatory pastes because, while the drug in such a cream is dissolving the hair, it must be working also on the surface of the skin.

Girls Who Are Too Tall

I have heard that in Los Angeles there is a girls' club, the members of which must be at least six feet tall. Now that all people tend to be taller than their parents, quite a few girls are much taller than they want to be. Many parents ask me what they can do to keep a girl from growing too tall. I am sorry, but I don't know what they can do. Perhaps it would be well not to stuff the girl babies of tall parents with extra vitamins—they are stimulators of growth.

The thing that a girl should do

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when she is too tall is to accept her handicap and to stand up straight. If she stands straight, she will look much better than if she slumps over forward. The big thing is not to get overly self-conscious, and, as these girls tell me, to watch out for a tall man!

Dr. Alvarez hopes his readers will understand that it would be impossible for him to answer requests for information or to attempt to diagnose by mail.

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COWS HAVE AILMENTS

Bonn, Germany.—(UPI)—Cows in West Germany's industrial Ruhr Basin are suffering digestive ailments caused by factory smoke and fumes, an official government bulletin said today.

Comment On This and That

 By HARMAN W. NICHOLS
 United Press Feature Writer

Bethesda, Md.—(UPI)—Why anyone would want a telephone on top of a baby grand piano was beyond me.

I asked the man who was handling promotion for a model dream house why it happened. Was it for piano players with three hands. The man blushed and said he didn't think so. But there was this purple telephone waiting for somebody to call. Nobody did. It hadn't been plugged in yet.

This beautiful home overlooks the Kenwood Country club. There are 13 phones and 13 rooms. It is, according to the designers, a "house of ideas." It cost \$99,000 to build. But that's a cost figure and doesn't include any profit mark-up.

The dream house is one of six such homes that have been built in as many years in other towns. Has Four Terraces
 This particular home, a three-layer job, was designed to meet the "varied interests" of a family with four kids. It has 3400 square feet of living space; four terraces.

There is a dial intercommunication telephone system, which extends to the outdoor areas. All sorts of other things, too.

The outside walls are of mahogany plywood and stone. The living room is almost completely enclosed by window walls and sliding glass doors. The built-up roof is covered with heat-reflecting marble chips.

There are two fireplaces. And if you can afford the price, there are two kitchens. I've always wanted two kitchens, with hired hands to do the dishes in both.

I'm an old dish washer myself. Since I cannot afford them, I just gawked. And envied.

Gawking was a lot of fun, and cost nothing but the ride out. The all-electric main kitchen, including a family entrance, is something to behold. It contains

two "elevator ovens" which run up and down, by button, for a hot snack in the dark of night or at midday.

Heated Towel Bar
 Another nice thing, if a body could afford it, is a heated towel bar. On cold mornings that would be fine. Who wants to dry down with a cold towel? It's something the very poor have always dreamed about.

There are nurseries and play rooms and a hideaway for the old man, with a locking, slamming door. All fine things, if you have the money.

There is hardly a room in the house where you can't shed your duds, run in, suds down and shower.

Fine living.
 But the builders of today haven't yet taken care of the business of the medicine cabinet.

Sure, the bath hovers have a place for the shaving gear of the head of the house. But there still is no room for the likes of bobby pins, hair nets, mascara, and perfume.

In this house there are no "his" and "hers" bathroom cabinets.

Births

BARNUM—To Mr. and Mrs. Frederick, 1132 Loal st., Sept. 20, 1956, a girl, 8½ pounds, at Sacred Heart hospital.

MOLE—To Mr. and Mrs. Richard, 1500 Spring st., Sept. 20, 1956, a boy, 7¼ pounds, at Sacred Heart hospital.

DALEY—To Mr. and Mrs. Duane, 763½ Posse lane, Sept. 21, 1956, a boy, 7¼ pounds, at Sacred Heart hospital.

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