

The British Association of Beauty Therapy and  
Cosmetology (BABTAC)

in association with Lynton Lasers

# Laser and other Light Therapy Machine Guidelines

experts in aesthetic technology  
**Lynton**

 **BABTAC**  
BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF  
BEAUTY THERAPY & COSMETOLOGY

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# I hello

BABTAC's notable heritage in the beauty industry means we're best placed to advise our Members on the change and development of the beauty industry. So when the Care Quality Commission announced their decision to deregulate Laser and other Light Therapy Machines (formally known as Laser and IPL), we recognised a need for BABTAC laser and other Light Therapy Machine Guidelines, to encourage best practice amongst our Members to keep both themselves and their clients safe.

The Guidelines also includes Local Rules, treatment templates and record cards that are BABTAC insurance compliant can found in the Member's Area of [babtac.com](http://babtac.com), making it easy for you to download, fill in your details and save to your computer.

BABTAC is working in conjunction with Lynton Lasers, experts in aesthetic technology, to bring you the very latest in the industry knowledge – all here in your Laser and other Light Therapy Machines Guidelines.

## **this guide will provide info to...**

- Allow a Therapist to perform safe, hygienic and effective Laser and other Light Therapy Machine treatments to a commercially acceptable standard
- Ensure treatment centres establish consistency in treatment protocols, procedures and record keeping that is recognised throughout the industry
- Minimise side effects and client complaints
- Provide Therapists with the knowledge and tools to reduce the likelihood of insurance claims.

## 2 insurance

A key benefit of BABTAC Membership, whether you are an individual or a Salon owner, is our excellent insurance policy.

To join BABTAC, or to renew your Membership, visit [babtac.com](http://babtac.com) and download an application form. To be fully covered to use Laser and Light Therapy equipment, you must select the relevant electrical treatments you are performing as an extension to your Membership and insurance policy.

If you are a Salon owner, you need to list each Therapist performing treatments with Laser and other Light Therapy Machines in your Salon. BABTAC also need copies of qualification certificates for all machine operators to ensure your insurance is valid.

### **electrical pre requisites**

Therapists need the following pre requisites to be covered by BABTAC insurance:

- Full or Salon Membership including electrical extensions
- A recognised qualification such as the CIBTAC Diploma in Facial Services with the optional Award in Electrotherapy (formerly Aesthetics Treatments Diploma) or the level 3 Certificate in Facial Electrotherapy or the level 3 Diploma in Facial Applications
  - OR NVQ level 3
  - OR NVQ level 2 with Electrolysis
- Or be a medical practitioner, doctor or registered nurse
- Certificate of competence from the machine provider

## **3 machines**

Familiarity with, and maintenance of, your machine is essential to provide consistent treatments. Best practice dictates that named persons are responsible for your machine. Familiarity with the model type and system will also allow you to answer and question a client may have, as well as confidence during a salon audit.

### **local rules**

We've supplied Local Rules, available in the Member's Area to download, to allow you to edit your details more easily for quick updates and to keep the document up to date. Simply replace the wording in red with the required details and save; it's also worth printing a copy for your files.

### **treatment protocols on a laser and other light therapy machine**

This step by step process is easy to follow, alongside your Local Rules:

- Set parameters according to protocols and manufacturers guidance and leave in standby mode
- Wash hands
- Cleanse area to be treated
- Wear disposable gloves
- For hair removal treatment, shave area to be treated with disposable razor, ensuring any free hair is removed from the surface of the skin
- Dispose of razor in sharps box
- Where appropriate, cool area with cooling method
- Mark out the treatment areas appropriately
- If applicable apply clear gel to patch test area with a spatula
- Client and Therapist to wear protective eyewear
- Take machine out of standby mode
- Commence with patch test

- Decide on treatment settings for the patch test and recognise an acceptable end point
- Start with low settings provided by the machine manufacturer
- Adjust settings based on client's pain, skin reaction and end points.

When you've finished the treatment:

- Put the machine in standby mode
- Remove cooling gel from treatment area
- Cool treated area if still feeling warm
- Apply aftercare gel
- Remove gloves
- Record treatment energies, machine settings and number of shots on client record card
- Turn off machine
- Advise client of any side effects they may experience and how to deal with them
- Carry out and explain aftercare advice
- Record accurately, all information appertaining to the treatment and its outcomes
- Complete Laser and other Light Therapy Machine log book.

## **5 machine operator**

As a BABTAC Member you are already trained to a high standard. Increasing familiarity with your machine as well as personal knowledge of treatments will ensure your clients receive high quality care, as well as reducing your risk and likelihood of insurance claims.

A salon must specify a Laser Supervisor as well as authorised users. The designated Laser Supervisor assumes overall responsibility for safe operation of the laser, including updating your Local Rules.

### **CPD training**

As technology moves on and new Laser and other Light Therapy Machines come on to the market, it is key to stay in touch with the latest developments and treatment trends that clients may request. To offer new treatments or use new machines, a staff training plan is required. Look at this as an opportunity to open up new revenue streams.

When focusing on Laser and other Light Therapy Machine training, it is important that two strands of training are identified. One relates to the generic understanding of the interaction of Laser and other Light Therapy Machines with tissue and the other to the use of a specific technology (such as model of Laser and other Light Therapy Machine) for a specific treatment.

This can be formalised within Continued Professional Development (CPD). BABTAC recommend this is part of Salon practice, although it is not required for insurance purposes.

CPD can consist of:

- Competency based training where activity is closely observed by a mentor (Laser Supervisor)
- Basic core of knowledge training in respect to Laser or Light Therapy safety

- Certified training undertaken by equipment supplier or distributor on machine operation
- Additional learning opportunities on generic topics.

CPD is measured on an hourly credit system, with a minimum of 7 hours CPD suggested per year. One CPD credit is allocated for each hour worked within the suggested categories above. Staff should have designated, standardised CPD portfolios, structured to allow individuals to update entries and monitor the process.

CPD portfolios are part of the template pack available in the Members area of [babtac.com](http://babtac.com)

CPD is useful not only for developing best practice in terms of use of Laser and other Light Therapy Machine systems. Including topics to develop a broader range of skills will have a positive impact on procedures and client care, as well as making staff feel valued, potentially reducing staff turnover and lowering costs.

CPD can also cover:

- Generalised health and safety requirements
- Computer literacy and training management skills
- Risk management
- Employment practice
- Client care.



# 7 salons

## room plan

Every Salon has a different layout, where emphasis should be placed on creating a relaxing and luxurious environment for clients. This will reflect a Therapist's experience and your Salon brand.

Standard room requirements are:

- Sink for hand washing before and after treatment
- A cooling device for the skin
- Air conditioned environment if possible
- Ventilation to assist in the removal of plumage
- Chairs for both Therapist and client
- Minimise reflective surfaces where appropriate and practicable
- Certificate of qualifications for each authorised user
- Diagram of the hair follicle and cycle of hair growth
- Fire extinguisher suitable for electrical equipment
- Fire exit sign.

In addition, the room used for Laser and other Light Therapy Machines should:

- Reduce potential cable trip hazards
- Prevent unauthorised access to room when in use or unattended to protect from laser beam injury or machine misuse
- Entrances should display a suitable warning sign whilst treatments are in progress
- Machines positioned to reduce the amount of movement during treatment; protecting mechanisms and fibre optics.

## **HR policies**

BABTAC encourage a transparent and detailed human resources policy within salons to protect both staff and business, and deliver a consistently high quality of service. Policies for the management of human resources are to be in place and implemented, with particular focus for Laser and other Light Therapy Machines on establishing appropriate vetting of staff prior to employment and the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of current staff. Don't forget that recruiting a BABTAC Member will mean that qualifications have already been confirmed, if they hold insurance with an electrical treatment extension as part of their Membership.

The designated Laser Supervisor (the named person in your Local Rules) is responsible for overseeing policies relating to human resource management with specific regard to Laser and other Light Therapy Machines, including:

- Identification of need for staff recruitment
- Verification of references supplied
- Verification of professional qualifications
- Undertaking of additional regulatory assessments e.g. Police checks
- Confirmation of offers of appointment and associated contract details
- Identification of training requirement for staff.

## 9 health and safety

Operating Laser and other Light Therapy Machines in a salon environment demands increased health and safety awareness, particularly in regard to safety, mechanical and administrative control measures.

Non-beam hazards:

- Electrical
- Mechanical
- Optical
- Fire
- Chemical.

Potential hazards to the authorised user or client in the treatment room:

- Accidental exposure
- Eye and skin damage
- Fire
- Plumage.

Correct personal protective equipment (PPE):

- Eye protection to the correct markings
- Skin protection e.g. moles and permanent Make-up may be masked with white liner pencil protective clothing and gloves
- Lung protection - it is advisable to wear a laser mask to prevent inhalation of plumage.

# 10 clients

The key to a successful salon is relationship development with clients; supplying relevant knowledge and understanding a client's physical circumstances. Ensuring a standardised process for client record keeping should be used through a salon and all staff trained in line.

## consultation

Work through a treatment plan with your client including:

- Frequency
- Duration
- Cost
- Possible maintenance programme.

Analyse and document information from the client, to include specifically:

- Personal details
- Medical history
- Current medication
- Contraindications
- Reasons for treatment and treatments required
- Client expectations
- Date of last treatment.

It's also important to understand the need for informed consent before any treatment is carried out:

- Voluntary consent given by a person for participation in a treatment regime after being informed of the purpose, methods, procedures, benefits and risks
- Client has the comprehension and knowledge
- Consent is freely given without undue influence
- Right of withdrawal is communicated to the client
- Assessment of patient to determine if consent requires a third person where appropriate i.e. learning disabilities or language problems.

Identify your client's hair type, colour and suitability for treatment:

- Enough melanin to be effective
- Enough difference between colour of the skin to colour of the hair
- Coarse or vellus
- Anatomical site and depth of hair
- Hormonal/racial influence.

All treatment areas require a patch test and should be carried out in a safe, hygienic and effective manner. Carry out the first treatment a minimum of seven days after the patch test, with special attention to hygiene, health and safety procedures starting with most suitable settings as a result of the patch test.

To be compliant with BABTAC insurance you are required to keep a record card for each client, for the duration of seven years. Good record keeping is needed to perform a successful consultation and identify key data required to create an appropriate and safe treatment plan.

## **treatment info**

Talk your client through the full treatment procedure and invite any questions they may have:

- Effectiveness and limitations of treatment
- Alternative treatment options
- Describe which Laser or other Light Therapy Machine is being used
- How treatment may feel
- How the treatment works
- What happens immediately after treatment
- Possible side effects
- After care procedures
- Management of skin/hair in between treatments.

## **contraindications**

Therapists must recognise the relevance of the following contraindications:

- Suntanned skin in the treatment area
- Fake tan in the treatment area
- Inappropriate hair and skin type e.g. blonde or white , very fine or vellus
- Photo-sensitive medication or drugs
- Photo-sensitive herbal remedies e.g. St John's Wort
- Skin pigmentary conditions e.g. Melasma or vitiligo
- Auto-immune problems e.g. Reynaud's
- Keloid scars
- Bruises/cuts/abrasions or dermatitis/eczema/psoriasis in treatment area
- Pregnancy
- Epilepsy
- Viral infections e.g. Herpes simplex in the treatment area
- Bacterial infections e.g. Impetigo
- Loss of skin sensation
- Moles or a history of skin cancer in the treatment area
- Currently undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- Permanent Make-up or tattoos in the treatment area
- Connective tissue disorders e.g. Scleroderma
- Porphyrria
- Gold salt injections for arthritis treatments.

Some conditions may need medical approval before treatment can commence:

- Cardiovascular disorders  
e.g. Thrombosis, phlebitis,  
hypertension, hypotension
- Age (under 18)
- Medication
- Hepatitis, HIV and AIDS
- Diabetes.

## 13 best practice tips

Simple tips that are worth all staff refreshing:

- Appreciate the importance of client confidentiality
- Take before and after photographs of the treated area to demonstrate the progression of treatment and for client reassurance
- Identify client's concerns and suitability for treatment
- Identify client's skin type using the Fitzpatrick Skin Phototype (SPT) and Ethnic Colour Type (ECT)
  - Levels of pigmentation in the skin
  - Skin tolerance to UV light
  - rate skin types according to manufacturers treatment protocols
- It is useful to pluck a selection of hairs and attach them to the client's record card with adhesive tape for future comparison.

### skin reaction

Therapists are required to analyse and recognise skin reactions during and after treatment.

Normal skin reactions:

- Hair Removal: Erythema, perifollicular oedema and sometimes a smell of plumage
- Vascular Lesions: Erythema and sometimes oedema. Lesions will either darken or fade
- Pigmented lesions: Erythema and darkening of lesions
- Acne: Erythema and sometimes oedema.

Unacceptable skin reactions must be recorded on the record card:

- Severe or prolonged erythema
- Severe oedema
- Changes in pigment for hair removal.

## **side effects**

Adverse side effects:

- Blisters (vesicles)
- Scabbing
- Superficial burns
- Hyper or hypo pigmentation

In the event of an adverse side effect, carry out immediate First Aid, making sure you document all responses and inform associated authorities if required. Reassure your client and keep them informed of what you are doing to minimise the reaction to the treatment. Remaining calm and professional will in turn keep your client calm and reduce unnecessary distress.

## **referral procedures**

Where applicable follow referral procedures:

- Referring the client to the medical professional
- Referring the client to a different Therapist

## **aftercare**

Ensuring clients are happy with the service means effective aftercare advice before they leave the Salon. This also serves well for increasing word of mouth business.



Aftercare should be discussed in brief during consultation, and detailed again post treatment to remind the client of their commitments once they leave the Salon. Specifically outline and explain to the client the effects and contra actions that may occur after treatment.

Explain to the client that after each treatment:

- To avoid touching the area treated
- Skin may feel warm and tender
- A cold compresses can be applied if treated area feels hot to the touch
- Slight swelling may be present and will subside within a short period of time
- Care should be taken to prevent trauma to the treated area for up to five days following treatment
- Apply suitable aftercare with dry cotton wool regularly
- Make-up can be applied as long as the skin surface is not broken
- Treated hair will fall out over the next few days depending on manufacturer's guidance
- Pigmented areas should darken and then fade after several days.

For hair removal treatments, make your clients aware of the appropriate management of hair growth between treatments. Hair can be cut with scissors or shaved between treatments. Hair can be bleached seven days after treatment and two weeks before next treatment. Avoid all other methods of hair removal, for example removal creams, plucking, waxing or electrolysis.

Grey or blonde hair that will not respond to Laser and other Light Therapy Machines hair can be treated with electrolysis or waxing two weeks after, followed by Laser and other Light Therapy Machine treatment providing there has not been any adverse skin reaction from previous treatment.

Implement aftercare and explain care of the area treated to the client including:

- Area treated should be kept clean and dry

- Heat treatments should be avoided for up to four days
- Don't immerse treated area in very hot water for up to four days
- Aerobic exercise including swimming should be avoided for 24 hours
- Don't apply perfumed products to the area
- Avoid sun beds and sun exposure for the duration of the course of treatments for four weeks after the last treatment and four weeks before the next treatment
- Sun block to be applied at all times to exposed areas being treated
- Self tanning products should not be used for ten days prior to treatment and five days after treatment
- Loose clothing should be worn on body areas to avoid friction.

Don't forget that seemingly simple tips are valuable to clients. Recommend and discuss a future treatment plan with client, including length of appointments and time between appointments.

When talking through aftercare with a client, take the opportunity to cross sell related products or treatments. You have a captive audience and they are close to the point of purchase, so maximise your business.

## **contact us**

If you have any further queries, as a BABTAC Member you have access to our friendly Membership helpline on 0800 250 7277, open from 8.45am – 4.45pm weekdays. We are happy to answer your questions about Laser and other Light Therapy Machines or Membership.

Visit our website at [babtac.com](http://babtac.com)