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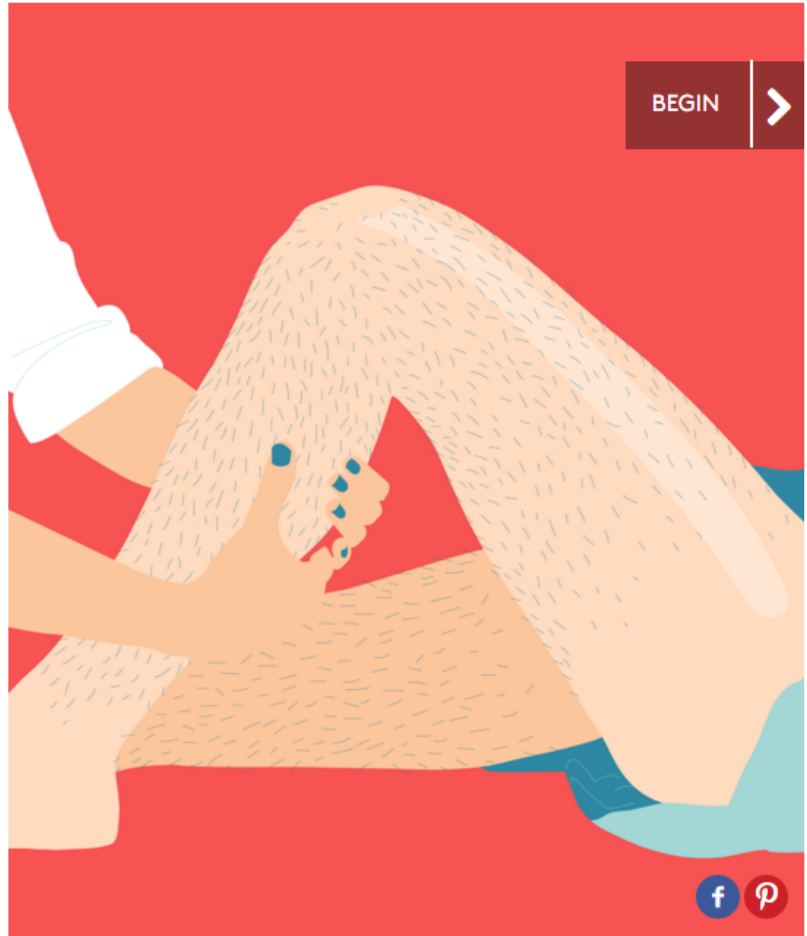
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MEGAN CAHN

After a particularly stressful and wintery workweek, I booked a massage. Hell, I deserved it. When I arrived at the spa, soothing music and the smell of lavender seemed to instantly slow down my pulse. But as I peeled off excess layers and slipped into the cushy robe, I suddenly felt as though my heart was stuck in my throat. *Shit. I forgot to shave my legs.* And in these icy conditions, it had been a *while*.

I had opted out for so long that it didn't even cross my mind to grab a razor in the shower as I went over the day in my head, wishing it were already over so I could enjoy my rubdown. Now that I was finally at the spa, all I wanted to do was bolt.

After I de-robbed and got as comfortable as I could with my "situation," the massage therapist began to press her hands into my muscles, kneading away the stress that had manifested into knots and tightness. My mind never fully settled, though. As the therapist moved on to my legs, I instinctively tightened around the shoulders. Worries that she was judging me soon turned into guilt about wasting this precious time (that I deserved, remember!) with such ridiculous concerns.

I'm sure I'm not the only one who has been in this situation — or a similar one — at a salon or spa. I'm all for etiquette, but all this worrying had to be unwarranted — especially in a place that specifically exists to help people unwind. So, I reached out to some industry professionals to get their take. It turns out, all the little things we stress over during treatments don't even register with them. Ahead, 10 things that should never get in the way of your pampering again.



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Being Hairy For A Massage

Okay, let's get right to it: Did my non-shaving insecurities have any merit? The answer is a resounding NO. The massage therapists and spa employees I consulted for this story don't give a hoot about a little (or a lot of) leg hair.

"Women apologize every day for not shaving their legs before a massage or a body treatment," says Chiara Campo, the spa manager at the [Grand Hotel Tremezzo](#) on Lake Como, Italy. "We don't care at all. We are perfectly fine with unshaved legs. There is no difference between women and men regarding this matter."

Massage therapists also have way more important things on their minds. "They are focusing on touch and treatment well beyond the stubbly surface, to the deeper tissue," says Slone Mathieu of [Dream Spa Medical](#) in Massachusetts.

For some services, like those that involve exfoliating scrubs or wraps, it's actually recommended that you don't shave beforehand. "Exfoliating after shaving isn't the best idea, as the freshly shaved skin will be sensitive and could cut in certain places," explains Tammi Johnson, spa manager at [Twin Farms](#) in Vermont. "Additionally, it could cause redness and irritate your skin."

Most importantly, whether you are smooth-shaven or not, the therapist's main objective is to make you feel comfortable.



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