

A very expensive cream

Submitted by: Dr Fox

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Have you ever wondered just how much some medicines cost? And, have you ever wondered whether the NHS should treat everything?

Considered Vaniqa cream and women who have unsightly facial hair? The distress is genuine, but the only prescription cream treatment costs over £60 for a small tube. True, people do not normally die from cosmetic problems and a small tube lasts quite a long time, but should the NHS pay?

Facial hair is more often a problem to women of South Asian and Southern European origin. There is considerable stigma involved. Women can feel unattractive and less feminine. Even so, unless a woman has seen a dermatologist and is suffering psychologically, the NHS is not likely to pay for Vaniqa cream. There are tablets which can help, particularly specialised contraceptives and HRT, but the only prescription cream is probably not going to be available to most women.

Vaniqa cream (<http://www.doctorfox.co.uk/vaniqa/>), as well as being a medicine, is a luxury product for those who can afford to buy it. Buying it privately is not straight-forward. Vaniqa (<http://www.doctorfox.co.uk/news/buy-vaniqa/>) cannot be bought over the counter without a prescription. A doctor must be consulted and a prescription is needed.

There are plenty of sites on the internet offering cheap and 'generic Vaniqa' but they are unregulated. Given the cost of the genuine item, fakes are a real possibility. There are UK regulated websites offering genuine Vaniqa, but prices vary. 121doc charges £110.00 for a tube and even the lowest cost site, Dr Fox (<http://www.doctorfox.co.uk/>), charges £72.50 for a 60 gram tube.

For those women who can afford it, is it worth it? Vaniqa works in most women with 3 out of 10 women having marked improvement after six months. On the other hand 3 out of 10 women do not improve. Women who want to try Vaniqa need to know that it is a long term treatment, which may take up to 4 months to work. Hair removers are still required because Vaniqa does not remove hair, it only reduces new hair growth and Vaniqa does not replace other prescription medicines. Wealthy women have a choice. For the other women, it's not an option, and the NHS is not likely to help.

Women who have increased facial hair should see their doctors for investigations and tests. Women who are distressed by facial hair should also talk to their doctors.

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