

13744 - Women cutting their hair and removing facial hair

the question

I am doing a project on Muslim women and would like to know what is the ruling concerning a Muslim's hair. Is she allowed to cut it as much as up to her shoulder or not/ what about facial hair? Is it haram to get rid of it or not. Please answer and pray my imam is strong.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

We ask Allaah Almighty to increase you in faith and to make you content with the truth.

Your question includes two issues:

1 - the ruling on cutting women's hair. Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

We do not know anything (to disallow) cutting women's hair. What is forbidden is shaving it. You should not shave your hair but you may cut it and reduce its length or volume; we know of nothing wrong with that. But that should be done in a proper manner which will please you and your husband. You should come to some agreement with him on a kind of haircut that does not resemble kaafir women, because if you leave it long, it will be a lot of trouble to wash it and comb it. So if the hair is very long or thick, and the woman cuts it to reduce its length or volume, that doesn't matter. Cutting some of it will make it more beautiful, which will please both the woman and her husband. So we do not know of any reason to disallow that. But shaving it altogether is not permissible, except in the case of sickness. And Allaah is the Source of strength.

See Fataawa al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah, part 2, p. 515

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It was narrated in Saheeh Muslim that Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd al-Rahmaan said: "The wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to cut their hair until it came just below their ears." (al-Hayd, 320)

Al-Nawawi said: this indicates that it is permissible for women to cut their hair short.

But women should avoid resembling kaafir women or immoral women when they cut their hair

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan said:

It is not permissible for a woman to cut her hair short in the back and leave the sides longer, because this involves disfiguring and fooling about with her hair which is part of her beauty, and it also involves imitating the kaafir women. This prohibition also applies to haircuts which are named after kaafir women or animals, like the "Diana" cut, named after a kaafir women, or the "lion" cut or "mouse" cut, because it is haraam to imitate the kaafirs or to imitate animals, and because that involves fooling about with a woman's hair which is part of her beauty.

Fataawa al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah, 2/516,517

2 - Removing facial hair.

Shaykh Muhammad al-Saalih ibn 'Uthaymeen said:

With regard to hair which is abnormal, because it grows in places where hair does not usually grow, such as a woman having a moustache or hair growing on her cheeks, there is nothing wrong with removing this, because it is abnormal and is disfiguring to the woman.

The Standing Committee was asked about women removing facial hair, and they replied as follows:

It is OK for a woman to remove hair on the upper lip, thighs, calves and arms. This is not the same

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as plucking (eyebrows), which is forbidden.

'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz, 'Abd al-Razzaq 'Afeefi, 'Abd-Allaah ibn Ghadyaan, 'Abd-Allaah ibn Qa'ood
Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 5/194, 195

The Standing Committee was also asked:

What is the ruling on a woman removing hair from her body; if it is permissible, then who is allowed to do that for her?

They answered:

It is permissible for her (to remove) everything except her eyebrows and the hair on her head; it is not permissible for her to remove those, or to remove anything from the eyebrows whether by shaving or any other means. She, her husband or one of her mahrams may do that for her, with regard to the parts of the body that they are permitted to see; or another woman may do that, with regard to the parts of the body that she is permitted to see

'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz, 'Abd al-Razzaq 'Afeefi, 'Abd-Allaah ibn Ghadyaan, 'Abd-Allaah ibn Qa'ood
Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 5/194

The hair of the private parts and the thighs may not be seen by either another woman or a mahram.

It is forbidden for a woman to remove her eyebrows or part of them by any means, whether it be by shaving, cutting, using a depilatory substance, because this constitutes the plucking for which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) cursed the one who does it, i.e., the women who plucks all or part of her eyebrows, claiming that it is for the purpose of beautification, or the woman who does that for her. This is changing the creation of Allaah which the Shaytaan

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promised to enjoin upon the sons of Adam.

See the answer to Question No. 2162, 1172, 1192

See also al-Fataawa al-Jaami'ah li'l-Mar'ah al-Muslimah, part 3, p. 877-879