Somatosensations experienced in male shavers after shaving the face and neck.

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Background

Thirty percent of male shavers report they experience irritation upon shaving but the physiological mechanisms of shave irritation are not yet identified nor fully understood. In order to relate irritation experienced during and after shaving to physiological mechanisms, it is necessary to first identify the somatosensations experienced by shavers. A shave study was carried out using male shavers, aged 25-64. The shavers underwent a brief articulation screening to ensure they were able to describe the sensations they experienced. All the shavers who participated in the study indicated they experienced irritation from shaving and were of varying self-described levels of sensitivity.

Candidate sensations and intensity scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensations</th>
<th>Intensity anchors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tugging</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinching</td>
<td>Barely Detectable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burning</td>
<td>Detectable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prickling</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stinging</td>
<td>Intense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tingling</td>
<td>Very Intense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmth</td>
<td>Tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itching</td>
<td>Stiff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tingling</td>
<td>Tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soreness</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Candidate somatosensations DURING SHAVE irritation only

Sensations Descriptions

Tugging A scratchy, pulling on coarse hair sensations that itch or make you want to scratch
Pinching A painful, pinching sensation perceived by a brush bearing sensation detected in the area where the hair is being pulled by its roots or getting caught in the razor blades.

Candidate somatosensations DURING AND POST SHAVE irritation

Sensations Descriptions

Tugging A sensation you feel when you take a warm shower
Pinching A tugging sensation similar to when you are bitten by an ant or mosquito and have a skin rash
Throbbing The beating sensation you feel when you take a warm shower
Pulsing A sensation similar to when you apply extra force to the razor for passing over hairs that are not instantaneously cut.

Mean of sensations on Neck during and after shaving

Very Low
Barely Detectable

Figure 2: Tugging, warmth and burning are the most intense sensations on the neck followed by soreness, stinging, tingling and pinching.

Figure 3: Tugging and Tingling are felt with similar intensity on the Face and Neck but Burning, Warmth, Soreness, Stinging, Prickling, Pinching and Itching are experienced significantly stronger on the Neck than on the Face.

Figure 1: Tugging and warmth are the most intense sensations on the face followed by burning and tingling.

Conclusions

- In this study all shavers experienced a wide variety of sensations during shaving.
- After a brief training session, shavers were able to identify and rate the intensity of shaving induced sensations using the descriptors and intensity scale provided.
- Significant differences were found between the intensity of some sensations experienced on the face compared to the neck.

Many of these sensations may be linked to physiological receptors such as TRPV1.

References: