

**Lasers may be more associated with rock shows and James Bond, but did you know that beauticians can also use them to give you younger looking skin? Gayle McBain tests out a new treatment available in Bolton**

WHEN I agreed to try out the new Harmony Pixel Laser I had a certain amount of apprehension which was, I am ashamed to say, bordering on fear.

What I couldn't quite accept was how something that resurfaces the skin doesn't damage it at the same time. This new laser is designed to help smooth skin, has the potential to reduce facial lines and wrinkles and improve the appearance of acne scars.

It's like a skin peel without the really aggressive peeling you see on some of those make-over television shows. Although bits of skin will flake off, it's more like recovering from sunburn I am told.

Having reached my forties the idea that my skin could be rejuvenated was too good an opportunity to miss.

Although feeling a sense of foreboding I decided to give it a go and headed for Bolton's Laserase Clinic, which is based on the Royal Bolton Hospital site.

Experienced nurse Alyson Porter talked me through the process, explained possible side-effects and she started to fill me with confidence.

The treatment itself is thought not to be painful to most people. Alyson assured me most patients experienced discomfort rather than pain.

This is where I obviously differ from most people. I did find it painful — although not unbearably so — and when Alyson suggested I could return to have my neck and



**CHANGING FACES:** A model poses before and after the laser treatment

chest area done in a second session I declined and decided to have it all done at once. There was the chance I wouldn't go back if I didn't have the whole lot done in one go.

It's a strange sensation and almost impossible to describe. Having said that it is bearable and I do have a sensitive skin which probably explains my reaction.

I started to feel hot, almost immediately, around the lasered site. Thankfully Alyson supplied ice-packs which definitely helped.

Once it was over I felt strangely proud of myself — I'm a bit of a softie and not renowned for my bravery.

I decided to keep a diary to remind me of what I went through in an effort to have more youthful, smoother skin.

I'm expecting to see results in around 10 to 14 days, so here goes.

**DAY ONE:** I am wondering what I've done as my skin feels as if it's burning. Surprisingly, when Alyson

passes me a mirror, I realise I don't look too bad. I go home, feeling a little sorry for myself as my face, neck and chest are burning.

**DAY TWO:** Was not really prepared for how dreadful my skin would look today — even though Alyson did warn me. I am supposed to be going to the chemist to pick up a prescription but can't face leaving the house. My skin is very dry, very tight and I plaster it with petroleum jelly which makes it look even more hideous.

**DAY THREE:** I decide to curl my hair because, I reckon, it hides my face a little bit. My skin is less red today but still looks a bit sore, although there is no pain now. I visit a local shop and I'm surprised at how many people look at me although I am aware of the fact my face is red and blotchy so you can't really blame them.

**DAY FOUR:** I can't put make-up on yet because my skin is so dry but it's looking much better. I plaster on sunscreen as I know my skin

is very tender and needs to be protected, even on a cloudy day.

**DAY FIVE:** My skin is looking great and I manage a very light foundation. Yippee! A couple of people comment on how healthy I look. That's good!

**DAY SIX:** Wow — what a difference a few days makes. No redness now and only a little bit of dry skin flaking off. Plenty of moisturiser later and my skin feels as smooth as a peach.

**DAY SEVEN:** Really pleased with how my skin feels today. Not sure the wrinkles around my eyes look less pronounced but the rest of my skin is smoother than ever. Realise now that I would definitely go back for further treatments.

**DAY TEN:** Delighted by the results. It may not be obvious to other people but I feel a definite improvement in my skin texture. If this is how great my skin feels after just one treatment how fantastic would it be after another one...or two... or may be three?

## What you need to know

### FACTFILE

#### ● How does the pixel work?

It creates thousands of tiny perforations in the skin and the skin around the perforations remains intact and the epidermis rapidly heals from these tiny holes.

#### ● What areas can be treated?

It can be used on the face and neck, chest, back, arms, hands and feet.

#### ● How many treatments are needed?

Skin resurfacing is a gradual process that happens over several treatments, depending on the severity of lines and wrinkles. A three to four week period between treatments is usually observed and subsequent treatments may improve the results considerably — although nothing can be guaranteed.

#### ● What is the Pixel used for?

It's used for lines, wrinkles, sunken scars, chicken pox marks and acne scarring. Studies are currently being made into the effects of the laser on burn recovery and trauma scars.

#### ● Cost?

It costs £400 for a full face treatment but there is a 10 per cent discount if you book a course.

For more information visit [www.laserase-bolton.co.uk](http://www.laserase-bolton.co.uk) or ring 01204 570900.

