



seeing the light

KATE WATSON HAD MEANT TO GET HER UNWANTED HAIR “ZAPPED” LITERALLY FOR YEARS BUT WAS TOO CHICKEN. THEN ONE DAY SHE BIT THE BULLET AND SET OUT TO BEAT THE FUZZ.

I JUST decided: it was zap-time for the underarm fluff. I picked up the phone and called Jane Gentle of Medi Light, a specialist in permanent hair reduction. I'd written and read enough about her in the past couple of years to think this was a good place to start.

Jane was pretty happy I'd finally succumbed, and recommended I shave under one arm before my appointment but leave the other rampant so she could take a photo. The photographic record allows Medi Light to track the progress of your treatments.

Z-Day arrived and, being a waxer from way back, I could only find my boyfriend's electric shaver. It took the hair off but left my sensitive skin raw and stinging. I hoped the zapping would be less painful but figured that was wishful thinking – surely permanent de-fluffing would be worse.

I was slightly nervous on arrival but my therapist Emma thoroughly explained the ELOS (electro-optical synergy) process first and I started to relax a bit. Apparently it's the

next step along from IPL – less painful, and suitable for almost all skin and hair types. A little machine is pressed against the skin and sends an electrical pulse down the hair, damaging the follicle. If the hair is at the right stage of growth, the follicle packs it in permanently. And if you don't get it on the first session, you'll get it eventually, which is why a minimum of six sessions is recommended. Most people take at least 10 sessions to feel they've beaten the fuzz.

Emma said it wouldn't really hurt. I didn't really believe her.

As it turned out, the explanation was the longest part. After it, I lay down and Emma smeared icy cold gel on my underarms before I closed my eyes and let her zap away.

I could see flashes through my eyelids and felt something like little rubber bands (but not as painful) flicking my skin. My fingers twitched involuntarily, which Emma says is normal, and I giggled because someone was touching my underarms, which she also says

is not unusual. I briefly wondered if it was doing something to my brain but it was pretty much over in a flash (ha ha).

The previously traumatised underarm was slightly more sensitive than the other, and a few hours later when they both looked red and angry, it seemed particularly offended, but there was no pain to speak of. I did feel some mild stinging here and there, which was soothed by the lotion Jane handed me on the way out.

So, was I right to be scared? Yes, because using electricity to destroy your hair follicles sounds positively awful. Was it awful? Absolutely not. Will I go again? Yes, and stay tuned to hear about the results in a few months. I will beat the fuzz.

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