

NOT IN VEIN

When even your dad notices the unsightly thread veins on your legs it's time to act. **Siân Townsend** tries out laser treatment at BodyLaser Clinic

I've been uncomfortably aware of the thread veins on my thighs for as long as I can remember. I've always moaned about them and people would tell me I must have had too many scalding hot baths or crossed my legs too much. I'm guilty of both, so I tried to stop and be good to my veins.

I bought creams that promised the world from the back of Sunday supplements but nothing worked. I'd heard of laser treatment but it sounded a bit too scary to me. Then, with my wedding and honeymoon on the way I finally bit the bullet and went to see Julie at BodyLaser.

I'm so vein

It turned out my thread veins were nothing to do with lifestyle or hot baths: they're hereditary and if you have them it's just bad luck. I was a bit worried when Julie said she'd never seen a cluster of veins as bad as mine in someone my age before, but I could see she obviously saw it as a challenge and assured me she could give me clear skin in a few treatments.

The treatment involves hitting the vein with a pulse of laser light that makes the blood contract and harden. The strength of the pulse is altered according to how deep the vein is, and over time the body re-absorbs the vein and your skin is left completely blemish free.

My very technical term for what happens next is that my veins are 'zapped'. It's all about stopping the vein in its tracks, Julie explains. I apply the laser at one end of the vein and when it contracts I then give it an extra pulse at the other tip to ensure it is fully gone!

Keeping my cool

BodyLaser has been using laser treatment for six years and offers laser hair removal as well as vein treatment.

'It works on the same principle,' Julie says. 'We use a slightly weaker setting to zap the hair follicle. After six or seven sessions of laser therapy you will be hair-free in the treated area.'

'The treatment does sting slightly but no more than that. The clinic uses a system called Cool Glide, attaching the laser to a plate of ice-cold metal which is applied to the skin first to slightly numb it, and then again afterwards to cool and minimise bruising. I was nervous at first, but by my second treatment I was chatting away to Julie and the team without even noticing the laser.'

The final result

Did it work? The photos speak for themselves: after three treatments I'm completely thrilled with the results. I'm not really a mini-skirt type of girl but I'll certainly be showing off my legs a lot more this summer. In fact, now that I can see just how good the treatment is, I'm getting fussy and I'm planning on going back to get smaller veins treated as well. ●

● BodyLaser Clinic, Essex House, 71 Regent Street, Cambridge CB2 1AB, 01223 464171, bodylaser.co.uk



Before: Deep purple and very visible veins



After: The area is almost completely vein-free

