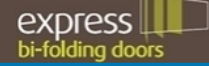
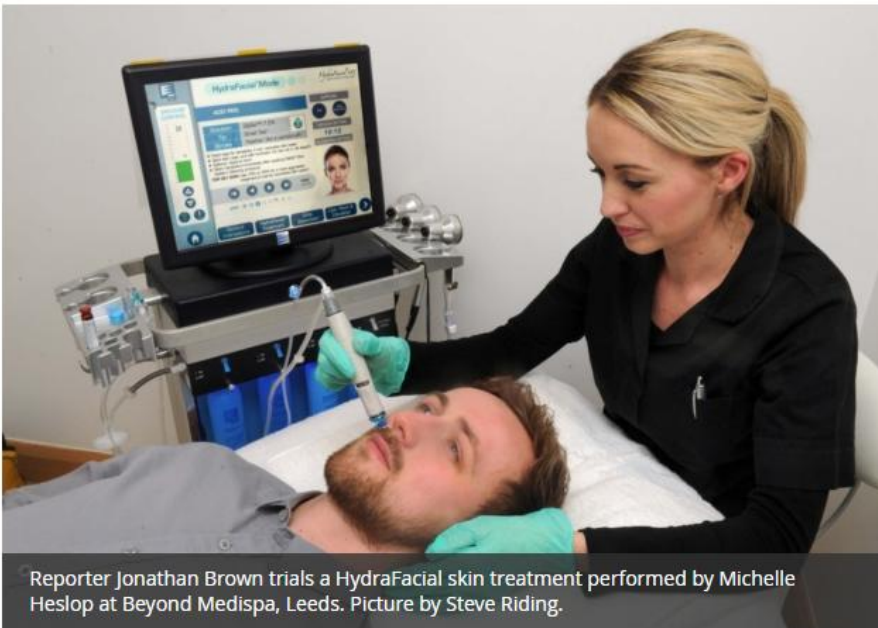


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## Health: Facial foray reveals beauty treatments for men in Leeds are on the rise



Reporter Jonathan Brown trials a HydraFacial skin treatment performed by Michelle Heslop at Beyond Medispa, Leeds. Picture by Steve Riding.

by Jonathan Brown

With the rumbling of the HydraFacial machine's daunting vacuum ringing in my ears, the thought crossed my mind, 'what am I doing here?'

Moisturising, cleansing and exfoliating aren't words that are particularly familiar to me - intense male grooming has always seemed a world away.

The very idea of going for a facial is outwardly frowned upon by the ultra masculine, but beneath the surface it appears many men are taking are thinking twice about their appearance.

I'm by no means alone signing up to have a facial skin cleansing treatment at the brand new Beyond Medispa clinic, in Harvey Nichols, Leeds, which has opened in the city on the back of increased demand from men and women. It has clinics in Edinburgh, Manchester and Knightsbridge.

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Michelle Heslop, senior aesthetician at the Leeds clinic, explained that around 30 per cent of visitors to Leeds skin centres are men, many are office workers in their mid 20s to late 30s wanting botox, facials and laser hair removal.

"There is a demand here. Because Leeds is more cosmopolitan, the men are a bit more open to this kind of thing," she said. "Things are changing, men are becoming more interested in knowing what's better for their skin."

My face was subjected to acid, moisturisers, a water-based facial and then some painful 'extraction' which tackled my blackheads. I came out red but fresh-faced mindful of the 'no pain, no gain' mantra of Leeds' secret metrosexuals.

And there is science behind the benefits. Dr Julia Sevi, of Aesthetic Health in Moortown, said men's skin is more oily due to the amounts of testosterone in the body, while facial shaving can cause issues. She said: "The facial anatomy of a man is different to that of a lady, you can't treat the two the same."

The awareness of skin issues in recent years has encouraged more men to seek treatment.

The Pretty Woman salon, in Oakwood, now sells male specific treatments and products. Manager Sam Haigh said: "Men are not quite as open about grooming but they're certainly conscious of it."

Meanwhile private care firm Nuffield Health has reported that more than 80 per cent of its surgeons have noticed a rise in men seeking cosmetic surgery amid a surge in the market in Leeds in recent years.

Mark Liddington, consultant plastic surgeon at Nuffield Health Leeds Hospital, said surgery for men has become much more socially acceptable.

"As well as keeping fit and active, we are seeing men place much more emphasis on looking well too," he said.

So having walked out of the Beyond Medispa skin clinic red-faced – more due to the treatment than embarrassment – I, like hundreds of men in Leeds, can have my cleansed head held high.



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