

Resort mum fronts drive to highlight benefits of little-known skin treatment

Cancer laser therapy left me beaming

A BLACKPOOL woman ignored the advice of three doctors, two surgeons and a dermatologist to seek rare treatment for her skin cancer.

Beverley Moy, of Warbreck Hill Road, North Shore, was told she needed surgery which would take a year to heal if she wanted a cancerous sore on her face removed.

But research on the internet led to her shunning the words of medical experts to use Photodynamic Therapy (PDT), a form of laser treatment, instead.

Just months after the remedy, her face is blemish-free.

She said: "I was told again and again that my lump was not suitable to be treated with PDT and that I should have surgery.

"But it was very close to my eye and would have left me with one permanently weeping eye.

"They would have had to have taken skin from the back of my neck to do it.

"Eventually I did get a referral from my doctor.

By **SHELAGH PARKINSON**

"I was only in hospital for three days and now there is hardly even a mark. I believe it is wrong that patients are not being offered PDT as an option. I was told that one of the side effects would be the pain and I was given lots of painkillers to take afterwards.

"But I just handed them back because I didn't have any pain at all."

Mother-of-three Mrs Moy had suffered from the sore for about three years.

Cancerous

It was caused by wearing a heavy pair of glasses and it refused to heal.

Doctors discovered it was cancerous although it was not life-threatening and would not spread.

She was treated at the National Medical Laser Centre at University College Hospital in London as an NHS patient.

The procedure can cost as little as £2,500, which is significantly cheaper than surgery.

The retired hairdresser was first injected with a drug which made her light-sensitive.

She was admitted to hospital and two days later had the laser treatment which takes just minutes. She was allowed home the next day.

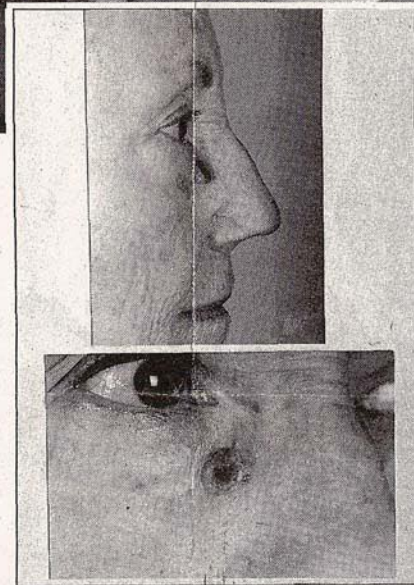
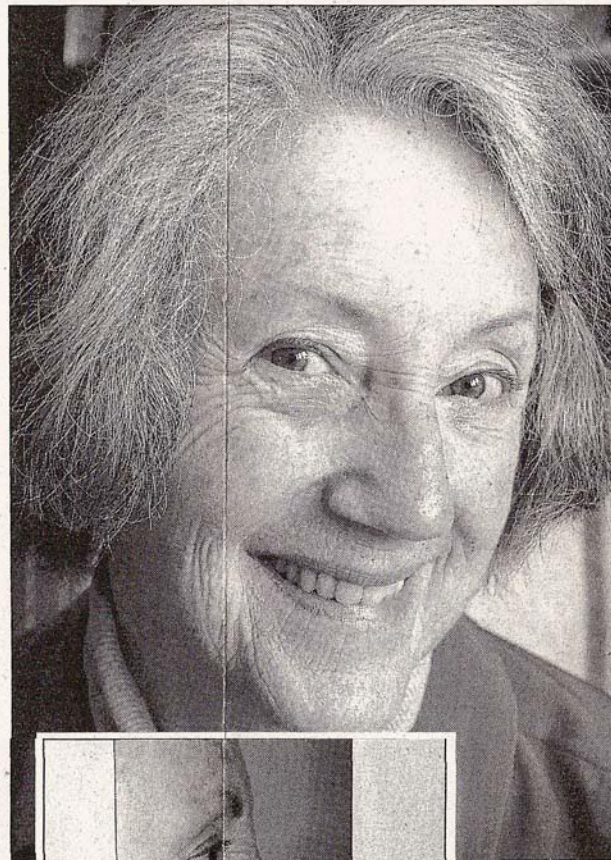
Now Mrs Moy is helping PDT charity Killing Cancer to promote the treatment, which has been around for 16 years but has not been widely used.

However the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), an independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on promoting health treatments, is now recommending the use of PDT for non-melanoma skin cancers for the first time.

Colin Hopper, a consultant at the National Medical Laser Centre, said: "I have been successfully treating patients with head and neck, mouth and skin cancers, for more than 16 years and the procedure has become my first choice treatment for many cancer patients.

"We have carried out over 600 treatments at our centre alone where PDT has become fully integrated in head and neck cancer management."

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CANCER CURE: Beverley Moy as she is today, without a blemish, and before with her skin cancer

Picture: ROB LOCK