

# Sweaty armpits run dry in new surgery

By EAMONN DUFF

AUSTRALIAN surgeons could put an end to sweaty underarms with cosmetic surgery.

An \$8000, hour-long procedure called Laser Sweat Ablation (LSA) uses a laser to burn away the sweat glands beneath the skin.

The result? A sweat-free armpit and an end to those socially awkward moments.

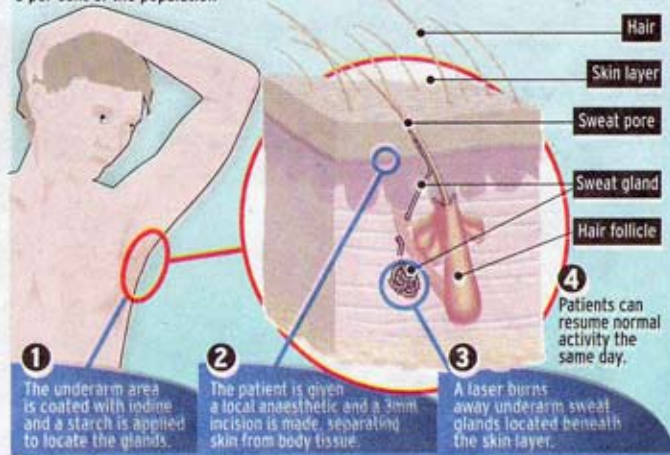
Argentinian plastic surgeon Guillermo Blugerman claims to have pioneered the procedure and successfully treated 400 people in South America. The operation became available in Britain last month and he says it is "only a matter of time" before it comes to Australia.

"We developed the method for people who suffer from excessive perspiration. For those affected, it ruins their lives. But this procedure changes all that."

Dr Blugerman says his clinic has trained doctors from Austria, Germany and all over the world. "Eventually, we will travel to Australia, but if there are doctors there who are

## HOW SWEAT GLANDS ARE REMOVED

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interested in offering the procedure before this, we welcome them [to Argentina] to train."

Hyperhidrosis – or sweating more than necessary to regulate body temperature – affects up to 3 per cent of the population.

Before LSA, people used Botox injections as a temporary measure or endured major surgery to cut nerves in the chest linked to the sweat glands.

In LSA, the armpit is first coated with iodine and a starch is applied to locate the glands. The patient is given a local anaesthetic before a three-millimetre incision is made. A surgical laser then burns away the gland. The procedure allows patients to resume normal activities the same day.

Dr Blugerman says patients experienced "minor problems"

in a handful of cases. "There is potential for liquid to accumulate in the area treated but this is not a major complication and can be solved quickly.

"You have to remember this is a very superficial procedure. The sweat gland sits just below the skin. We remove this tissue. The result is we are able to reduce perspiration in this area for 80 per cent [of patients]."

A fellow of the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery, John Flynn, said if the surgeon was experienced and had received appropriate training, it was a safe, effective treatment.

"There will be some debate about whether it's necessary or not. For many, excessive sweating is a genuine issue. Personally, I think it's something individuals need to determine for themselves," Dr Flynn said.

"The reason we sweat, primarily, is to maintain our body temperature. People should remember that if they do reduce sweating under their arms, they're still going to compensate for that elsewhere."

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