

A helping hand from Eve's agony aunt **Fiona Caine**. If you have a problem with your relationship, marriage or family, Fiona is here to give advice



CAN I GET HELP WITH CHILDREN?

I am really struggling and in need of help but don't know where to turn to. I recently gave birth to twins, one of whom has health problems which means going to and fro to hospital with her. I have two other children, both under five and sometimes there is no one to help so I have to take the whole family to the hospital.

I am exhausted all the time and nearly at the end of my tether. My husband helps all he can but he works long hours struggling to hold down his job in these difficult times.

My friend says she's sure there is an organisation that could help but I don't know where to start looking. Do you have any ideas? S.A.

There are times when everyone needs help and fortunately, your friend is right, there is an organisation you can turn to.

Home Start, which has centres in Blackpool and Fylde, offers support to families in difficulties where there is a child under five years old - so you qualify on four counts!

Sometimes bringing up a family can seem overwhelming and you have a huge amount to cope with so a Home Start volunteer would, I think, really benefit you, and they do help out in families where multiple births mean parents have their hands full!

Mostly this support involves visiting families in their own homes but group support and social activities are also available. Support begins when either a family refers themselves or else the referral comes from a health visitor, GP or other professional.

Volunteers are all fully checked for a criminal record and they offer completely confidential support. Once you ask for help, you will meet a local organiser

who will match you with a volunteer. Although there are more than 300 schemes across the UK the service doesn't reach everyone, sadly. But contact the head office on 0800 068 63 68 and, if they can't help you, they will do their best to find you someone else that can.

I'M ASHAMED AT CRYING SO MUCH

I have been feeling very down recently and could do with something to make life better. In the last 12 months my marriage broke up and then both my parents were killed in a road accident. I try to keep myself busy with my work and family but my two sons are grown-up and don't really need me.

I've been doing some voluntary work for a local charity but sometimes I am ashamed of the fact that all I want to do is cry and I just don't know what to do with myself. What's wrong with me? L.N.

Let the tears flow and allow yourself to grieve. There is nothing at all wrong with you - you are behaving like anyone who has had three major losses in the past year might do.

Keeping busy is, for some people, a good way of getting over bereavement but others need time to heal. It's possible that you've pushed yourself too hard and not allowed yourself enough time to grieve. Rather than bottle the tears, let them out and have a good cry.

You may feel awful for a while but in time you will start to feel the loss less acutely.

You could also benefit from talking to a counsellor from CRUSE Bereavement Care. You can reach their helpline on 0844 477 9400

You seem to have a strong, positive attitude to life so I'm sure you'll find yourself feeling better before you know it.



HAIR WE GO!

IT'S that time of year when we lay ourselves bare to summer scrutiny! Hitting the beach, or baring arms and legs in summer clothes, can be a hairy dilemma, for those with the problem of unwanted and excessive body hair.

Figures show the average woman will spend around £3,900 on waxing over about 30 years to defuzz legs, armpits, face and bikini line and get rid of unsightly body hair. And waxing lasts around six weeks - longer than shaving, so don't even try to start counting the cost of throwaway razors. For those who have excessive hair, it can feel like a never-ending battle to keep under control.

Laser hair removal has been around for a good few years and claims to offer a solution to the hair problem.

Tracey Robinson, from Cleveleys, turned to laser hair removal after she got fed up of having to shave her underarms every day. And the 34-year-old, who is self-employed, said she was 'delighted' with the results.

Tracey had the treatment at the Spire Fylde Coast Hospital on St Walburga's Road, Blackpool.

She said: "I had heard about laser hair treatment and thought I would give it a try. "People think it is expensive, but when you add up how much you spend on waxing, razors and so on, it works out better value. "I had tried everything really - shaving, waxing, epilating - you name it I'd tried it. "And I had to shave under my arms every day. That makes them sore and it isn't really practical.

"I travel a lot and do Pilates, so I wanted a solution which was convenient and easy and long-lasting," she added.

"I can't believe the difference the laser treatment has made.

"I expected it to work a bit, but didn't think it

Getting to the root of a beauty dilemma. **Emma Harris** reports

would have anywhere near the effect it has. "In between my first two treatments - a period of four weeks - I think I only had to shave about twice.

"The difference is remarkable. "It saves time every day, it's not something I have to worry about now, it's so much more convenient.

"I had it done in the winter, because you can't expose your skin to the sun before or after the treatment.

"I think it's important to have it done somewhere professional, though, by someone you can trust."

Ali Juma, the surgeon who performed the treatment said he had many clients - including men - who are, like Tracey, pleased with the results of the treatment.

He explained that the laser is painless and does not affect the surrounding skin. It works by targeting the hair follicle or route, to disable it, or "switch it off" and stop hair from growing.

But it doesn't work on everyone - blonds are the exception as the laser targets the colour pigment in the hair follicle.

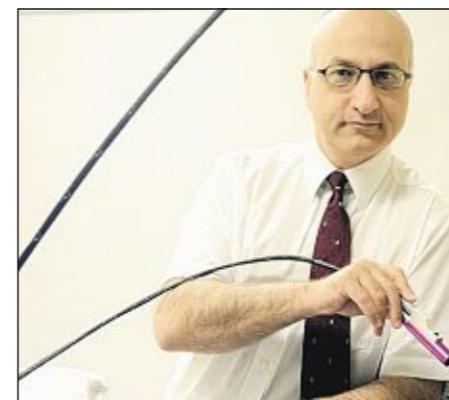
A course of treatment is required in a cycle of three to six weeks, initially, but after that patients only need one or two treat-



BARING UP: Tracey Robinson getting hair removal treatment from Mr Ali Juma



ments a year for maintenance. A course of sessions costs an average of £450 for underarm and £580 for bikini line. The laser can also be used to treat thread veins and "sun spots" on the skin. Mr Juma said: "It's not a permanent treatment, but it is a robust treatment. The most popular areas to be treated are the underarms, face, bikini line, pubic area and the legs. "There are men who want unsightly back hair treated, perhaps they feel uncomfortable about going swimming in public and so on. It reduces any need for shaving and minimises hair growth. "For most people, it has a very good result."



Leigh sets her sights on Miss England title



WINNING SMILE: Miss Preston winner Leigh Osgerby with sister Helen Vavoso and mum Sharon Osgerby, right

A GIRL with a dazzling smile is on a quest for the crown in the Miss England final. Dental nurse, Leigh Osgerby, 24, put on a sparkling performance on the catwalk to take the Miss Preston title and with it a place in the Miss England final.

The win was a real bonus for Leigh who entered Miss Preston after being beaten into second place in the Miss Fylde Coast heat of Miss England by teacher Kerry Capoverde.

Leigh, who works as a senior dental nurse, qualified for Miss Preston because she works for practice in Deepdale and she will now represent the city in Miss England which is held over two days, August 31 and September 1.

"Miss England will be nerve wracking but I am really looking forward to it. Winning would completely change my life.

"It's going to be so exciting, but I am nervous because the final is going to be televised."

Leigh, who was educated in Leyland, moved to St Annes two years ago. Her sister Helen Vavoso lives in Lytham.

Helen and their mum, Sharon Osgerby, were at Miss Preston to cheer Leigh on. Leigh, who has a model figure at 5ft.9ins tall and a trim size eight, has a busy year ahead with engagements as Miss Preston, but hopes she will be able to do some work with local children to raise awareness in the importance of looking after their teeth. "We have a lot of children coming to us for fillings and I want to raise the profile of oral health."

Her radiant smile will help put the message across. "My teeth are white and they're all healthy," she said.

As Miss Preston with a bundle of prizes including a photographic portfolio. "All the girls have been great and I have made some good friends," said Leigh.

"I had entered Miss Fylde Coast and was runner-up by one point. I learned a lot and enjoyed it more the second time round."

Mark Jones, regional organiser, said: "The judges were looking for how the girls present themselves, their confidence, their look and how they come across on stage and in interviews."