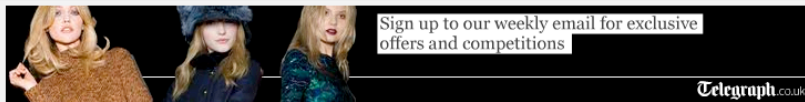




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## Beauty diaries part 1: The hi-tech experimentalist

*Eyelash extensions, injectable fillers and freckle burning are all in a day's work for this beauty adventurer.*

BY AVRIL MAIR | 21 OCTOBER 2010



Avril Mair, 38, Elle beauty columnist

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As Elle's 'Beauty Extremist' columnist for the last two years, I've tried and tested countless cosmetic-medical treatments - from the weird to the wonderful, via the undignified and excruciating. I don't have a problem with self-esteem or body image: I don't feel pressured to conform to any kind of beauty ideal and I don't even mind getting older really. Call it reckless but I just enjoy these adventures. The desire for self-modification is surely the oldest of biological impulses, so I explore the frontiers of my vanity with fearlessness - I'll take whatever science can offer, shamelessly, even enthusiastically. Thus far, no regrets.

**WEEK 1**

**Wednesday:** I'm not high maintenance when it comes to beauty - I never have manicures, pedicures, facials or blow dries - but I am addicted to eyelash extensions. I go to Groom in Selfridges every other week and spend 45 minutes having hundreds of long, dark lashes applied individually to my own. Even without make-up, I still look like I've made an effort.

**Friday:** I'm running the Nike women's marathon in San Francisco next month. I thought the training would mean I'd be able to eat everything I wanted. I was wrong. After the

first month I've lost one single, solitary pound. Still, I am committed - thanks to my trainer, Brian Cochrane. I see him every Friday, then run another five times on my own. I'm amazed at my ability to push my body beyond its usual limitations.

**Saturday:** Hair colour with Aime Wilson at Daniel Hersheson. The best in the business, with a clientele of fashion editors and pop stars, I see her every month. A very chatty Sarah Harding from Girls Aloud is being bleached in the chair next to me: we talk about fry-ups and hangovers.

**Monday:** I'm a little nervous of injectible fillers. A touch too much and it's either pillow-face or porno lips. But I agree to try out Restylane Vital - a new product which is fine enough to be used to hydrate and rejuvenate the delicate under-eye area. Dr Ayham Al-Ayoubi, who I've seen for other treatments, injects it in tiny little drops. It doesn't hurt and I don't look weird, just a bit less tired. I do develop a huge bruise, though. The Future Husband, usually sanguine about my beauty adventures, is sympathetic - until I confess it's self-inflicted. Then he calls me silly. Sometimes it's hard to argue.