ATM scam here: cops

Halton Regional Police are warning the public of an ATM scam that has plagued Milton and the Greater Toronto Area.

On January 21, Peel Regional Police arrested a 32-year-old Mississauga man whom police allege is involved in a series of fraudulent scams involving debit cards and are searching for up to four more possible suspects.

Between September and December of 2001, a number of banks in the GTA have been targeted by the ATM scam, including the Bank of Montreal at Milton Mall and the CIBC kiosk on Main Street — both hit in October.

"An individual puts a device into the debit machine that will jam the card and make the machine go out of order," said Det. Kim Duncan of Halton Regional Police. "Somebody is standing nearby and watches the person at the machine, trying to get their PIN number. When the person leaves to alert the bank, the device is taken off the bank machine and the card is removed. Because the suspects now have the person's PIN number, they will take money out of the account or make empty envelope deposits."

On several occasions, Det. Duncan said, the suspects will try to assist the person who's trying to use the machine after the card is stuck.

"They might say it's happened to them and to just punch in the PIN number a few times and it should work. Meanwhile, (the suspects) are watching for the PIN num-

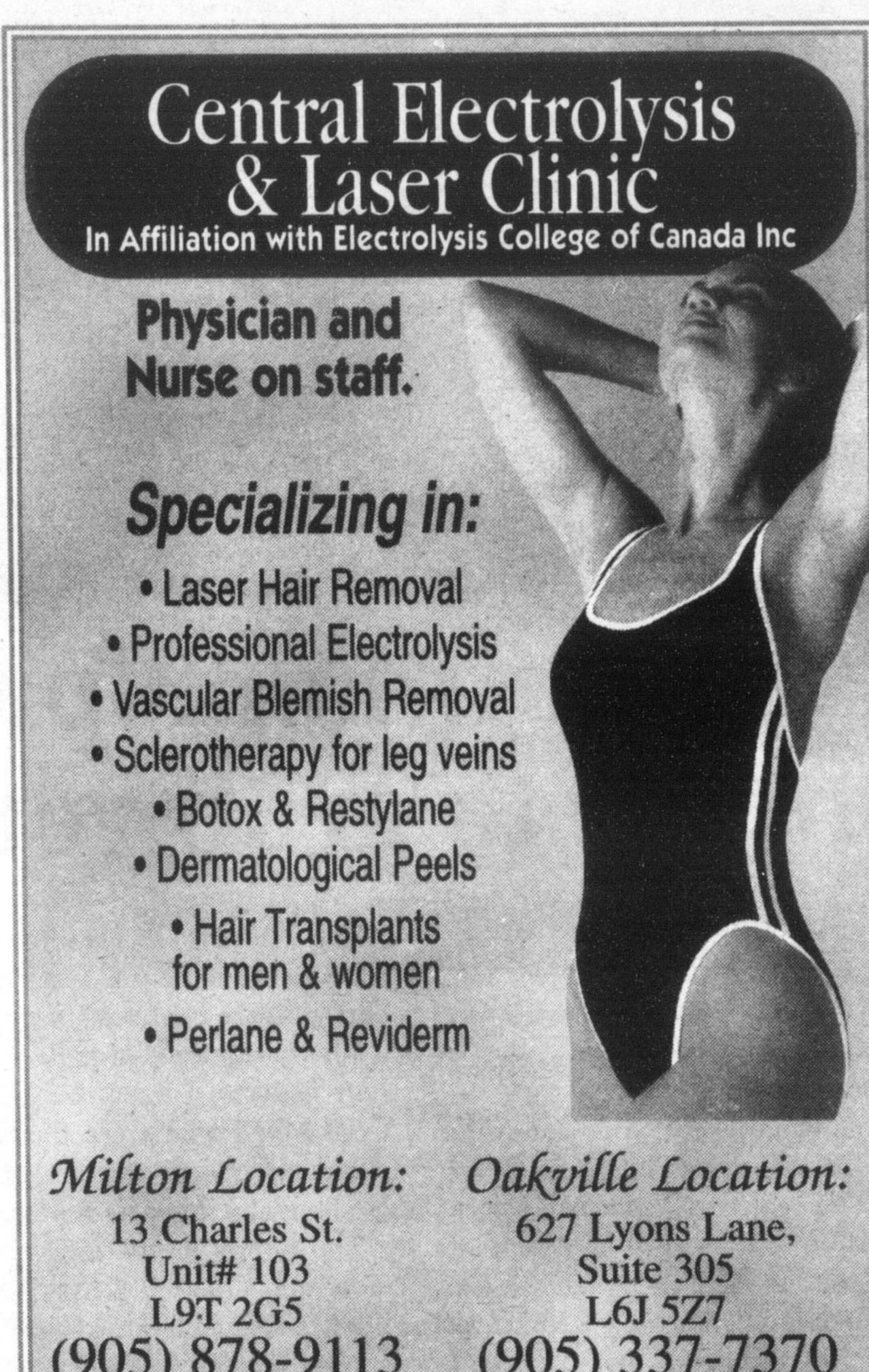
Halton police have issued printed warnings to all banks in the region warning of the scam, she said.

"We're asking people to observe the

bank machine for any type of devices near the machine or people just hanging around," Det. Duncan said.

To report an incident, call 878-5511.

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