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The True Lives of Bodysuits

I stood slipping my dress over my shoulders. We are all super conscious of each other in the ladies' locker room at the gym. We keep our space as we slip on our silkies. We keep our backs against the open land of ladies changing. Every now and then, however, it is necessary to twist or turn in a certain way to maneuver that arduous article of clothing. I twisted to the right this time. That's when I saw it; the large, round, white-laced rear end of a woman. She was bent over, struggling to pull the back flap of her hanging black bodysuit through her spread legs. She was a contortionist about to perform a tumbling act. Her white panties screamed at me for help as the woman suffocated them with the bodysuit thong. Isn't the year of bodysuit over?

As sleek and seductive as bodysuits are (while your lower half of clothing is still intact), who can deny their onerous ways, which often lack in grace and dignity? Who won't admit that the laborious act of adhering the crotch of the bodysuit invokes images of an inverted woman performing a self-gynecological exam? We are all silently self-conscious of this. Even

the most self-assured women may do anything to avoid putting a bodysuit on in the presence of others. I too have resorted to locking myself in bathroom or distracting my boyfriend with a small kitchen fire while I have (not so) quickly jumped into lycra one-piece.

"I did wear them [bodysuits] in college. I don't think I could stand the hassle now.

- Jen
Age 26

Most women between the ages of 25 and 30 agree. The year of the bodysuit is over and has been since our generation graduated from college and received our well-deserved diplomas in university wisdom. We became erudite in matters of history, economics, calculus and literature. We learned to navigate campus life in tightly clung, scoop-neck one pieces and stifling jeans to match. Looking back fondly on those days, though be it behind blurred vision, our innocuous ways forever imprints an era of disarray and fashion follies in our minds. The bodysuit, specifically, brings forth memories of exasperation and impressive moments. Three areas of trouble come to mind.

The Wedgie.

Many a woman has claimed that the bodysuit is fertile breeding ground for wedgies. One way to combat this is by NOT going commando. Wearing underwear may help alleviate the tendency of the bodysuit to crawl up into unwanted places. Also, a woman may feel less

exposed and vulnerable in the act of snapping with the protective panties in place. On the other hand, wearing the underwear puts you at risk of looking like a fifth grader going to gymnastics practice while you constantly have to work at tucking the edges of the bikini briefs into the bodysuit. Thus, to wear underwear or suffer the wedgie: it is really the lesser of two evils.

"I haven't worn a bodysuit since junior year in college. I don't think I especially liked them, but everyone else was wearing them. Doesn't say much. I had a perm for the same reason."

- Kelly
Age 27

Let's make it snappy...

The biggest complaint about the bodysuit is the snaps. These simple metal devices are not the easiest instruments to operate when they are in such a precarious location. Anne, a 27 year-old fashion designer at Nordstrom's, refuses to wear snap crotch bodysuits.

"I don't like the snap crotch version. They always come unsnapped or there is one snap that won't snap, leaving me feeling lopsided. I only wear the pull on, thong version now."

Kelly, a Boston resident and fellow 1994 University of New Hampshire graduate has also given up the bodysuit. She agrees with Anne when asked for her opinion on the snap crotch.

"I don't know where to begin. It [snapping the crotch] is not right on way too many levels. I wouldn't wear the velcro kind, though, for fear that it would come undone and have some bad sort of slingshot effect."

There is no easy solution.

Jen is a 1996 graduate of the University of New Hampshire. Her biggest gripe with the bodysuit is the frequency with which she had to snap.

"Snapping the crotch was a is annoying. Especially late night at a bar when you had to do those snaps every half hour!!!"

Yes, outside factors can indeed add to the level of difficulty to suiting up.

May Your Cupeth Runeth Over

In sobriety, it is one thing. In the eyes of a woman who has had a few gin and tonics, going to the bathroom while wearing bodysuit is a whole other story. It was like being asked to construct our own massive holes of metal and their connective counterparts, rather than merely

bringing the two ends of the bodysuit together. But we persevere...or we leave the bodysuit dangling.

Snapping up after a night of even modest drinking can be the most labor-intensive task.

By the time the early morning hours render us impaired, the bodysuit has usually been neglected; snaps only partially together, if at all.

“I feel like at some point in the night, it seems like a good idea to leave them undone”, Kelly gasps.

“I once had to snap my friend’s bodysuit on her 21st birthday and she didn’t have on any underwear. Now that is true friendship.”

- Jen

“I probably wouldn’t even attempt ... actually, the panels may end up hanging on the outside of my clothing without my knowledge.” Anne reflects fearfully.

Thus, it is easier and safer to fore-go the snapping. As Jen confirmed for us, it is not uncommon for an inebriated, inverted woman to fall over in mid-snap.

And We Will Get Fooled Again...

While bodysuits may be a dying breed, they are also a predecessor and successor alike. College-goers today have spawned their own form of the fashion folly in the revival of the 4” platform shoes. Our mothers may be thankful for their era’s hampering hoop skirts when they see the cinderblocks that reside on their daughters’ feet.

I look forward to the year 2001 as I recall endless hours in the bathroom and subterfuge dressing. But, I have to admit, that black, satin V-neck number I found on www.bodysuit.com would look great at a New Year’s party. Maybe I will wear it with my platforms.