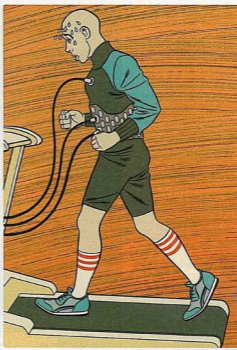




Wellbeing by David Nicholls

**THE TRYOUT** **HYPPOX VACUNAUT** **What is it?** It sounds far-fetched, as it promises to do what we are constantly told is impossible: target areas for fat loss. The user wears a high-tech body suit that is hooked up to a machine that alternates low and high vacuum pressure to the waist and abdominal areas. The idea is that fat is used as the primary energy source for your workout and is thus burnt off. **How did it go?** Things improved after the mortification of being seen by fellow gym-goers in a Lycra bodysuit. I was helped into a secondary wet-suit-type outfit, hooked up to various hoses, and 'vacuum-packed' into it. Then I spent 40 sweating minutes walking at a slight incline on a treadmill as the compression chambers rippled and tickled across my stomach and lower back. At the end of the session I was unrippet, and the sweat literally poured out. I felt awful for my instructor, who should have been issued with Mergolds. **Ugh. Afterwards!** Believe it or not, it worked. After six 40-minute sessions (three per week for two weeks) I lost 5.5cm around my upper waist and 2.5cm around my lower waist. In fairness, I did follow the advice I was given about eating, but I certainly wasn't dieting nor was I smoking in extra workouts. **Would you do it again?** Undecided. I enjoy more active and varied workouts and – after the initial novelty – found the fairly boring Hypox Vacunaut costs £350 for 12 sessions, recommended over four weeks (0800-731 133; hypoxtraining.com). **DN**



**SUPERFOOD MUSHROOMS**

- Of about 14,000 species of mushrooms, roughly 3,000 are edible.
- They provide potassium (helps maintain normal blood pressure) and copper (helps protect the heart).
- A high protein content makes them a good option for vegetarians.
- They contain selenium, which teams up with vitamin E to produce antioxidants.
- A study by the Beckman Research Institute in California claims that white button mushrooms lower oestrogen levels, thus reducing the risk of breast cancer.
- Being mostly water, they have few calories, but their strong, meaty flavour intensifies with cooking.



**THE EXPERT ADVICE**

**AVOIDING SHIN SPLINTS**

Shin pain is common among runners – tight, inflexible calves, weak shin muscles, flat feet or excessive pronation (feet rolling outward) make injury more likely. Choose shoes that will prevent pronation and give good arch support, and be sure to stretch your calves and Achilles regularly. To strengthen the shin, walk on your heels for 30-60 seconds, and stretch them by kneeling on the floor and sitting back. **Jessie Baird**, fitness instructor at Aqua Spa London (j@fitnesscoach.com)



**THE GEAR** The Ribcap looks like an average woolly ski hat, but it is in fact a high-tech piece of kit made with '0.0 micrometre responsive protection'. Translation: when the soft hat is struck, the material 'locks together' to absorb impact. It's not exactly bullet-proof, but will give some protection from a bump when you're on the slopes. **£59.99** (0871-218 1128; streetgizmo.com).



**The spa eco-friendly**

**Titanic Spa, Huddersfield** This opened last year and has already won several awards. Built in an old textile mill on the edge of the Pennines – a breathtaking spot – it is, along with 500 houses, part of Britain's first large-scale domestic solar-power project. There are 11 suites with views over the countryside and an adjacent health club with a chlorine-free swimming pool, bubbling hydrosone and under-water music. Therapies from reflexology to reiki and the relaxing hop ear-candle treatment are on offer. Packages include a four-hour Elenis Journey with aroma stone therapy, Visible Difference facial and Chiffoux ocean wrap – a comprehensive spa experience. Book the Elenis or Decior Time. To Indulge packages, which include a facial, a wrap and a Jessica manicure (from £199), or the Sunday Night Stopover, with the Titanic hammam heat experience (from £125; Titanicspa.com). **Other eco spas** SenSpa, Hampshire (10 per cent is knocked off your bill if you arrive by public transport). From £144 for a one-night SenSpa Relaxer (senspa.co.uk). The Bamford Hay Barn, Gloucestershire. Built with eco-friendly materials, and with a focus on alternative beauty. The Haybarn Ayurvedic Ritual, £110 (daylesfordorganic.com). **Kate Shapland** telegraph.co.uk/logo