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Boxers, briefs may no longer fit

New underwear fashions make boxers, briefs plain old boring for the trendy tush

By Wendy Navratil
Chicago Tribune.

``You wore tighty-whities to a wedding?!" exclaimed one female friend to a 20-something male dinner companion on a recent Friday night.

Not a strategic fashion choice on an occasion that ended with mixed-company skivvy-dipping in the hotel pool, she scolded him.

His shame -- he did not offer his name to inquiring eavesdroppers from the next table-- points to the underwear-awareness revolution among men.

``Boxers or briefs?" has become a quaint question in an era that brings boxer briefs, G-strings, trunks (proportional to Burt Lancaster's sand attire in *From Here to Eternity*) and even styles with built-in condom pockets from a brand called basket.

Comfort, fit and outerwear are driving the underwear innovations.

The brand 2(x)ist has made a name for itself with briefs with a contour pouch rather than the traditional fly.

Lower-slung denim, a trend spreading to men's jeans, and other close-fitting clothing, have inspired a switch to sleeker underwear styles, such as the trunk and bikini brief. Said Dan Leppo, men's divisional merchandise manager for Bloomingdale's.

``Imagine stuffing a pair of boxer shorts in a pair of Seven (men's) jeans," he said. ``It wouldn't be a great look."

For peekaboo fashion, Calvin Klein just added a men's underwear line called Pro Stretch with a red waistband. Diesel's new line includes a tricolor fitted brief.

According to 7,000 responses to an online survey by Freshpair.com, 31 percent of men prefer briefs, 30 percent prefer boxers, 21 percent prefer thongs, 10 percent prefer to wear nothing and 8 percent prefer other styles.