

Columbus Dispatch

FASHION PLATE

August 10, 2003 Sunday, Home Final Edition

What's in style? What's in store? What's the buzz? Let **Fashion Plate** be your guide. Call Accent Reporter Marshall Hood at 614-461-5237 or send e-mail to mhood@dispatch.com.

Hip maternity wear

You're a young, hip mom-to-be who refuses to turn her back on fashion for nine months.

But "maternity" doesn't equate to "frumpy."

Mimi Maternity's fall collection, for instance, hits the season's top trends for urban hipsters: retro '60s style with a dash of rock chic and classic menswear touches.

In the mix: cargo pants and skirts, leather miniskirts, sweater vests, corduroy pea coats, Nordic sweaters, quilted jackets and suede halter tops.

Mimi Maternity stores are at Easton Town Center and Polaris Fashion Place.

Back wax no more

The last time Men's Health magazine showed a hairy-chested model on its cover was 1995 -- telling of the trend of men opting for the sleek and clean look and the explosion of hair-removal products and services for guys.

There's even a new terminology in spas and salons that offer waxing: Chest waxes are "the boxer's wax," back waxes are "the swimmer's wax" and leg waxes are "the cyclist's wax."

Until recently, men had to rely on less-than-comfortable waxing or women's products.

Now, an old dog in the men's grooming business, Clubman USA, has come out with Creme Hair Remover.



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Formulated to remove stubborn hair from back, chest, arms and legs, it exfoliates, moisturizes and is said to last longer than shaving.

Costing \$7, it is available at drug and beauty-supply stores and many hair salons.

Repellent apparel

The first clothing that repels insects should be on the market by fall.

North Carolina-based Buzz Off will sell shirts, pants, shorts and socks for men and women through outdoor outfitters Orvis and Ex Officio. Prices have not been set.

The "insect shield" applied to the clothing, which recently received Environmental Protection Agency approval, will repel mosquitoes, ticks, ants, flies and chiggers for about 25 washings, according to the company. Too much info about undies In a blatant but clever promotion of its Web site, underwear retailer www.freshpair.com has proclaimed Wednesday National Underwear Day and intends to send 20 male and female models throughout New York in their skivvies.

They're asking the rest of us to showcase a bit of our underthings by leaving a strategic button or two unbuttoned that day.

The stunt highlights underwear's role in today's fashion. Once rarely viewed, "unmentionables" are now meant to be seen beneath see-through blouses, peering from the back of hip-huggers and, of course, riding above the waists of low-slung jeans.

Of the \$160 billion Americans spend on apparel each year, \$12 billion is dropped on underwear: \$8.6 billion by women, \$3.4 billion by men.

As for preferences, men are split almost evenly among boxers, briefs and thongs or "nothing." Women opt for panties (52 percent), thongs (31 percent), "other" (we're not asking) 10 percent, and "nothing" (7 percent.)

Most interesting in www.freshpair.com's research is the percentage of men who admit having tried on women's underwear: 73 percent.

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