

## Nano-tech: The new super-smart fitness fabrics

April 15th 2014

/ Kinvara Balfour



The new fitness fabrics get your arse in gear even when you don't, while silver is about to protect you in a big way in this digital age

Lycra is so last decade. When it comes to fitness gear – actually, let's call it 'urban gear', because these days everyone is on the run - nano-technology is where it's at. And it's getting your arse in gear like nothing else. In LA, you have to dress to compress. Not to mention de-stress.

The new wave of tech-intelligent fabrics give your body an extra workout. Professional athletes have been on to this for years; now brands are bringing them to the mainstream. Whether as leggings, shorts or vests, you wear them when hiking or jogging, on the ski slopes or the beach, or just when you're pushing a trolley around the supermarket (specifically Wholefoods on Fairfax Avenue – LA's central catwalk of active wear).

These new fabrics improve blood flow and circulation, prevent sagging skin, and help reduce cellulite. Some even protect you from radiation in the new digital age.

### The new protection

Let's start with the latter. I am beyond excited about ARJUNA.AG. This groundbreaking new brand – a 'luxury protective fashion company' from American designer and friend, Mikaela Bradbury - makes silver-based clothing for 'travel and active urban living' which purports to shield the body from electromagnetic radiation (from mobile phones, wireless energies and electronic weirdness in the air).

It sounds alarmist and futuristic but I assure you it's not. Unlike existing active wear lines that use silver, ARJUNA.AG uses medical- and military-grade material coated with 18% -by-weight pure silver ions that create a conductive shield against electromagnetic radiation. The clothing and accessories – which rival anything from the likes of Adidas by Stella McCartney on the design front - boost stamina, improve circulation, and ward off germs. In addition, they offer other therapeutic benefits like thermal regulation and anti-inflammation for joint or muscle pain. The Monkey Mind Ban is a headband/eye mask for yoga, meditation and air travel, while the hoodie, track pants and underwear act as 'everyday armour' for a busy life. Trust me – this company is going to be BIG.

## Dress to compress

The trend for compression wear is also big. Take MACOM® Smooth, for example. The company specialises in post-surgery and post-natal compression garments and has launched a range of exercise clothes that perform the same process.

Surgeons encourage patients to wear compression garments following surgery to give support, minimise bruising/swelling and to speed up the recovery process. Continual external pressure keeps skin smooth and evenly compressed; this, in turn, minimises the chance of sagging and the formation of unwanted lines and wrinkles. MACOM® pants and leggings are made with a fibre called emana® which is scientifically proven to improve micro-circulation in the surface layer of the skin. The improvement of thermo-regulation promotes collagen synthesis, because when you introduce heat, you speed up lymphatic drainage.

There's Under Armour® too, whose ColdGear® and HeatGear® clothes compress the skin and help maintain body temperature. After a hike the other day, a friend was wearing – boldly – some compression socks from Wodbox. He looked ridiculous but after a previous hamstring injury, he said these had helped in a big way.

## On our wavelength

Firma Energywear is made of a polyamide-based yarn that has bioactive minerals in it. When the garments are worn, they absorb far infrared (FIR) energy from the body in the form of body heat. The fabric emits the FIR back to the skin at an optimised wavelength. This is the same energy that is generated in infrared saunas, which are known to improve circulation, reduce inflammation and flush toxins from the cells.

I'm no scientist. I'm just a girl who wants to keep her butt in shape, her blood flowing and her skin as firm as can be. I don't understand all the tech know-how, but I'm buying into it anyway. Because when I'm running around – and that's pretty often these days, be it at home, down the street, across Heathrow Terminal 5 or up to the sunny heights of the Hollywood hills – I wouldn't mind a tighter arse, a calmer head and a super-charged bio-field while I do it.

