

wear a shoe that makes our feet look smaller, our ankles look thinner, our calves more shapely, and our legs just longer. The high heel is the only shoe that can do this for you. There is really no point to the ugly high heeled boot or shoe as you are not getting comfort, and it's well, ugly. Men have three basic types of shoes to choose from: athletic, casual (sandals or deck shoes), and black/brown lace ups. That's it. And they're all flat and they don't hurt. They totally win on this front.

Swimwear: While swimwear itself need not hurt when you're wearing it, it's the constant sucking in and adjusting which can cause shortness of breath, aching ribs, twisted shoulders, and cricked necks. And this doesn't even address the (again), waxing, shaving, or exfoliation (what is that?) which takes place beforehand...or the three years of thrice weekly workouts which have reduced your baby stomach pooch by about 1/2 inch. Men don't feel the need to wax or shave their bodies and they're the ones that can wear swimshorts which reach past their knees, without looking stupid. In fact, they look more ridiculous the smaller their swimsuit is. (If you're European and you wear a Speedo, know that all North Americans think you are gross — get over it.)

Bras: Similar to shoes, the nicer a bra looks, and makes you look, the more uncomfortable it is. Pushing, pulling, lacey, stringy, elasticized pieces which leave you with more red scratches than the guy you put it on for. The sports bra feels great, but isn't going to look great under a T-shirt (hello droopy). Any flash of skin will get most men going, so this look can still work in the bedroom...provided it's not grey and torn like the one you're wearing right now.

Hair: Start with burns to your cheeks and scalp with a curling iron, and move forward from there. The burning in your eyes from the colour or the perm; brushing out the 10 ounces of hairspray you had to use to get your hair to last from home to the office and out for an office reception; twisting and scraping to get it out of your face for the 1/2 hour gym session; adopting strange and hurtful contortionist positions to see that one spot at the back of your head you know is looking nasty... too bad Sinead O'Connor's look didn't catch on. What would we do with all the time and the painfree moments?

Thong Underwear: Naturally the worst offender. The only fellows who have to cope with that piece of string between the cheeks are male strippers in g-strings (other fellows, like accountants, who choose to wear g-strings in their leisure hours, or worse, at work, we don't have any sympathy for). Enough said.

Perhaps the reason women are more willing to suffer pain to look or appear to be better (as 99 per cent of our pain is self-inflicted, including pregnancy when you think about it) is that we feel guilt if we are accused of letting ourselves go. This is not a surprise. Women feel guilt over many, many things. Their jobs, their children, their sex life, their weight, their hair, their relationship with their parents, their thighs, that last Christmas present they bought for their brother...and the length of time in between their last waxing.

Kathy Buckworth's latest book *Journey to the Darkside: Supermom Goes Home* is available in bookstores everywhere. Visit www.kathybuckworth.com