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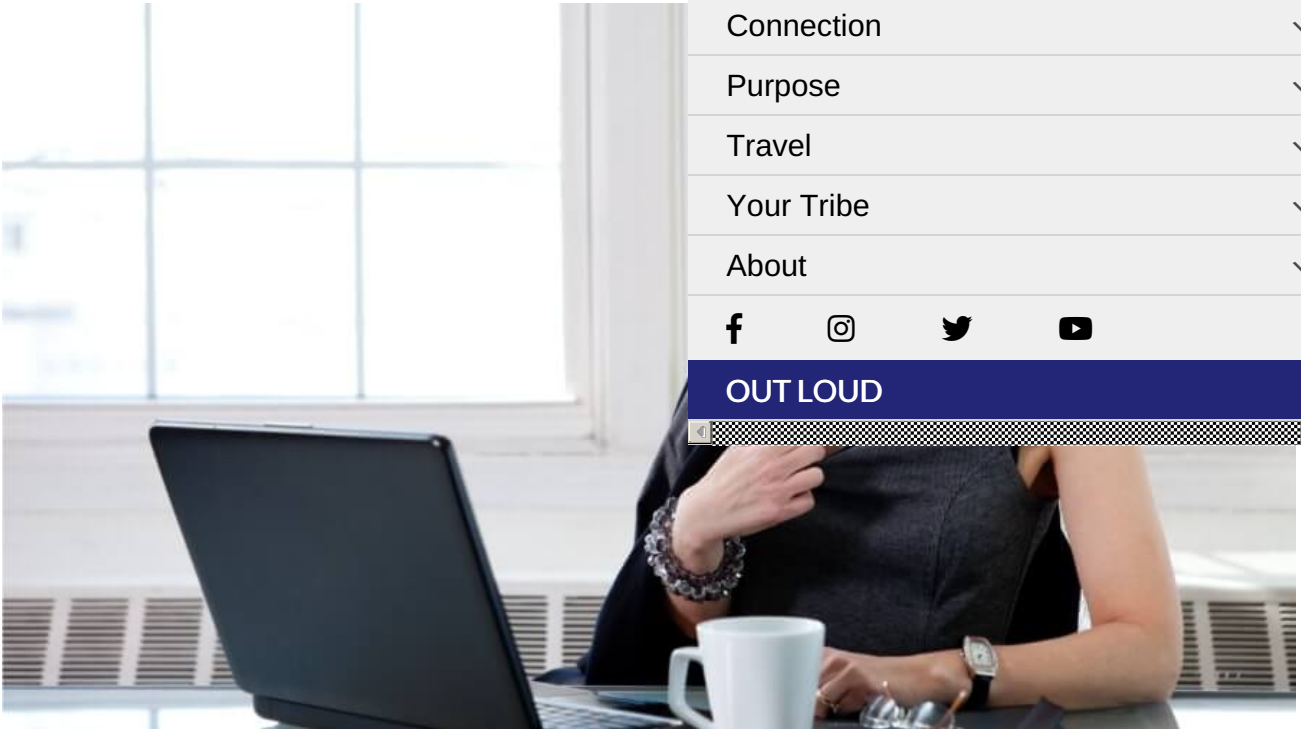
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AUGUST | 2018 DEBORAH SKOLNIK

Hot Flash Remedies: We Road Test 3 Ch Help

Ready to dial down your steaminess level from NC-17 to a nice PG? Our intrepid reporter Deborah Skolnik road tested the coolest hot flash remedies on the market—here’s what she learned.



Menopause didn’t sneak up on me, the way grey hairs did. No, my menopause had a scheduled day of arrival—February 13, 2013, when I was 45. That’s when, bowing to certain health concerns, I had my ovaries and fallopian tubes surgically removed. Soon after, I began to experience a side effect my physician had neglected to mention: Hot flashes.

Sure, I had heard of them before, the way you hear certain bummer terms—*root canal*, *tax audit*—without truly grasping how much they suck, at least not until you experience them for yourself. Same with hot flashes: There’s a world of steamy misery sandwiched between those two words. It starts with warmth across my cheeks, then a clammy dampness as perspiration gathers at my neck, making my hair frizz. Within seconds, it’s as though I’m in a no-exit sauna. During the worst flare-ups, my whole body will feel as if I’m trudging through the Saharan Desert wearing a North Face puffer jacket.

I’m always looking for relief—something more elegant than my go-to solution of nestling a cold soda can in my

cleavage. There seem to be plenty of options on the market these days, but *which ones really work*? To find out, I put three hot-flash-busting products to the test.

Pillow Power



First up: *The Hot Flash Pillow*, listed as a top pick on Amazon's website. At \$25, the Hot Flash Pillow will set you back no more than a couple of movie tickets and aims to dial down your steaminess level from NC-17 to a nice PG. Intrigued, I ordered it.

My first impression, once it arrived, was that it's not really a pillow—it frankly looks more like a windowsill draft blocker. A pleasantly soft cotton case covers the sausage-shaped interior, which has a "natural" filling (a peek inside revealed some kind of grain). I followed the instructions, freezing my pillow for several hours prior to use, then snuggled into bed with it draped over my shoulders.



While its coolness wears off after about an hour, the Hot Flash Pillow lets me drift off to sleep comfortably.

While the Hot Flash Pillow's filling is odorless, I quickly discovered it's good at picking up faint odors from your freezer. "How long have those fish sticks have been in there?" I wondered—hardly a sleep-inducing thought.

But I wouldn't be nodding off for a while, anyway. The pillow was eye-opening *cold*, and its heft (it weighs about 2 ½ pounds) was noticeable. Eventually I slung it over just one shoulder, which felt better, and its temperature subsided to pleasingly cool over the course of about 10 or 15 minutes. I've been using the HFP almost nightly since then, and while its coolness wears off after about an hour, it lets me drift off comfortably. It's worth the minor splurge—just stash it in an extra-large Ziplock bag before tucking it in the freezer to keep it from smelling like whatever else is on ice at your house.

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The Pajama Game



So I'd solved the problem of early-sleep hot flashes. But some of the worst hot flashes I get are in the wee hours. Perspiration will roll down my chest, and I'll wake up in drenched pajamas and a tangle of wet sheets; not a lot of fun unless I've been dreaming I'm doing the dance sequence from *Silver Linings Playbook* with Bradley Cooper as my partner. And I'm looking into his pool-blue eyes as our bodies move in time to a sexy Stevie Wonder song, and...

Where was I? Oh yeah. Wee-hour hot flashes. One company, *Cool-Jams*, claims to have the answer. Its sleepwear is made from polyester microfiber, which supposedly wicks away moisture. I decided I'd give it a try.



The pj's were lavender and trimmed with prim lace—more like what you'd expect Mrs. Pence to wear.

Perusing the website, I settled on a *pair of shorty pj's*—shorts and a matching tank top. At \$69, the price was steep, which meant I'd be setting the bar pretty high for these. And while "Cool-Jams" kind of sounds like you'll be getting a slinky negligee that Cardi B would wear to bed, my pj's were lavender and trimmed with prim lace—more like what you'd expect Mrs. Pence to put on before slipping between the sheets and saying "Goodnight, Mr. Pence." But hey, if my new sleep set did the job, it would be worth it. I wore it to bed the very first evening it arrived.

Miracle of miracles, I slept through the night. I felt a hot flash come on around 3 a.m. The familiar perspiration rolled across my chest as usual ... but somehow it just, well, disappeared. At breakfast time, the pj's still felt enjoyably temperate, and they wash well. They're my new favorite jim-jams. Side note: They run small. Or I run large.

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Scarf Trick



This brings me to my final product, one for the daytime —*Sweatopause*, a combination scarf-headband made from fabric with a “Coolcore” technology. Wet it and wave it in the air before wearing it, and it’s supposed to cool you down up to 30 percent below your body temperature. At \$30, it’s no more expensive than many other scarves, so it was well worth a gamble.



The scarf was cooling, but its dampness made the hair at the back of my neck frizz—exactly what I was trying to avoid.

When I opened the package, I immediately wished there was a little more to my Sweatopause—long and narrow, it resembles the ascot Fred wears on *Scooby-Doo* more than an actual scarf. But I liked the peacock-print pattern I had ordered, and the fabric is finely knit enough so that it can pass for silk from a fair distance. I decided to be brave and wear this baby to work.

The good news is that the Sweatopause really is cooling. And on two of the four wearings to date, I actually got a compliment on my jaunty fashion accessory. But its slight dampness made the hair at the back of my neck frizz—exactly what I was trying to avoid. And while it’s effective at keeping my neck cool, it does little to the rest of me. It’s worth it if only for the fun look and the minor relief, though.

A new cryotherapy place just opened in my town. The idea of sitting in a near-freezing tank, dressed in my Cool-Jams with my Hot Flash Pillow, is very appealing. Until then, if you see a woman running around town with a *peacock-print ascot*, just wave hi. And to all my fellow flashers out there, cheer up: We’re the original hot stuff.

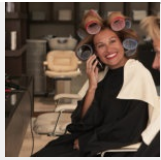
Deborah Skolnik is the director of content for NYMetroParents. Her critically acclaimed poetry book, 100 Days of Gentle Scarsdale Satire, was published in 2015.



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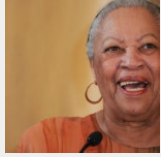
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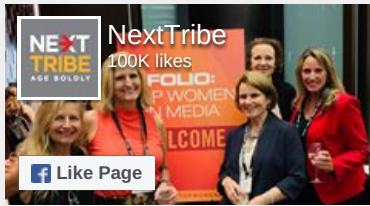
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NextTribe believes that now—at midlife—is our shaken-etch-A-sketch moment, when the slate is once again blank. Today, our conversations question which direction we are headed in and how to get there. How to drink it all in and how to give back. We'd like your voices and humor to be heard, your ideas to be shared, and for you to hear ours. This tribe is one of contemplation, inspiration, wit, and action. Though we may have men in our lives, we believe it's invigorating to touch base at a time like this with people who have the same sagging parts and swinging moods. Now that we have more time for adventure, more experience for new life paths, more wisdom to connect the dots in our histories, and less care about what people think, we're sure these coming years can be a glorious stretch. Spiritual and irreverent, creative and courageous, this site, these postings, will serve as our cave drawings and warrior paint. Please join us on our walkabout.

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