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Wellness
 Published December 8, 2007

Gifts of health and healing

Spread good cheer with premier wellness products to lower that tension a notch for friends and family, writes CHEAH UI-HOON

Market Report

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Monday Closing

THERE'S this website called www.stupid.com which is dedicated to selling the most idiotic gifts for Christmas, with this year's star product being a nutcracker in the shape of US presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton.

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Affordable pampering: The wellness market is brimming with new gizmos and gadgets for a better life. Highlights include eco-friendly firm Terra Plana's Dopie shoes, Texenergy Cell bodysuits to fight the flab from seasonal feasting, Osim's anti-snore pillow, books for gourmands, US-made Healthway EMF (enhanced media filtration) air filters and Baby Foot foot exfoliator soaks that promise happy, healthy feet

While good for a stress-relieving laugh, there can surely be better ways to spend your hard-earned money, which should be on useful Christmas presents (as much as some of the stuff on www.stupid.com are actually quite fun to have), especially as the wellness market is brimming over with new products to make your life better. There's no guarantee that all of them will work for you, but the science and technology behind these products are fairly intriguing. Here's a look at the highlights of this year's premier wellness products as gifts for yourself, family or close friends.

Seeing that snoring is fairly common and annoying, and sometimes a health risk, Osim has launched its version of the Anti-Snore Pillow. The

Sona Pillow actually has clinically proven results to significantly reduce or possibly stop snoring and mild sleep apnea.

Invented by a renowned neurologist, Dr Najeeb Zuberiand, and sleep-tested in US clinical trials, the Osim Sona Pillow's patented design lets you sleep on your side, positioning your jaw slightly forward to help you keep your airway open. Retailing at \$199, it's the only US FDA-approved pillow to help stop snoring and mild sleep apnea. The pillow is made of cotton and filled with hypoallergenic, polyester fibrefill.

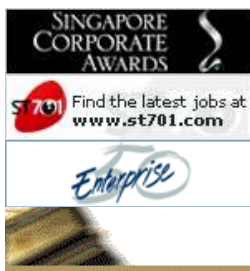
And how about changing the way you walk? Eco-friendly company Terra Plana's Dopie shoes (from \$59.90 upwards, available at www.epitome.sg) do look unbearably dopey, but they adhere to the barefoot belief - that going barefoot is best for our bodies. The Dopie is made from recycled EVA and foam rubber, and are made of a single shape sole, which then folds up between the first and second toes in a knobby pinch. New versions have a strap across the foot to provide extra control.

And if you're going to go barefoot, might as well make sure that your feet are presentable. Japanese brand Quick Beauty has come up with Baby Foot, a foot exfoliator soak designed to melt away dead skin cells on the soles of our feet. The key ingredient is Pyroligneous Acid, extracted from the smoke when charcoal is made. Besides this, there are also plant

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extracts like orange oil, Camellia Sinensis leaf extract, algae, ivy and sage for their moisturising effects.

Although it's a two-hour soak, the application is mobile. You slip your feet into socks and into the rubber boots provided, filled with the solution. Your skin starts to peel and renew on its own after five to seven days, with dead skin cells exfoliated away. (Available at Guardian outlets at \$59.90 a kit).

And if you're worried about an expanding waistline with all the seasonal feasting, check out the Texenergy Cell bodysuits (available online through www.panmedic.com.my). The theory is that minerals aren't just good for your bones or your face (as in mineral makeup) but also your fat and cellulite.

These Italian-made Texenergy Cell garments are made of strands of copper, zinc and silicon interwoven with soft micro-fibre. The 'active' fabric generates a tiny electrical current that stimulates micro-circulation, to reduce localised fat in adipose tissues. Copper has qualities of being anti-oxidative and anti-inflammatory, zinc is good for healing wounds, with anti-bacterial action, while silicon is an excellent anti-oxidative, with softening properties.

It's based on an old metallotherapy theory that metals can be placed on the body for healing. But perseverance is key, as one is advised to put the suit on for eight hours a day (you can sleep overnight in it or wear it during the day) for eight weeks to see the maximum benefits, even though you're likely to spot some difference in 10 days of continuous wear.

Besides for the use of slimming and cellulite reduction, Texenergy also creates a range of pain relief bands to treat inflamed joints and to recover joint functionality. These bands come in 35, 65 and 100cm lengths which can be wrapped around any part of the body to treat pain.

While we haven't experienced a bad haze this year, all of us do realise how important it is to have clean air, especially if there are asthmatic children in the family. Indoor environment specialist IEQ Global Pte Ltd has brought in the US-made Healthway EMF (enhanced media filtration) air purification system, which is the world's first and only patented system that's able to capture contaminants in the air and kill 0.3 micron-sized microbes at 99.99 per cent rate. That's the size of typical viruses, bacteria and mould.

The Healthway EMF air purification system is an FDA-listed class II medical device, classified as a device used to treat, cure and contain a known disease. The technology was originally developed in collaboration with the US Department of Defence to combat germ warfare. Retail units range from \$900 to \$1,300, and they also tackle odours. (For information, please call IEQ Global's sales centre at Ang Mo Kio at Tel: 6482 5055).

Last but not least, books on health continue to fill the bookshelves, and this year, we've seen some exceptional books which educate you on the origins of our food as well, instead of promoting diets. Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* is an excellently written book on the politics of US corn-fed beef (and why you should avoid eating it), among other things. And for the gourmand, Linda Gassenheimer's *Perfect Portion: How to Eat Your Favourite Foods and Still Lose Weight* is a picture-led book that advocates eating less rather than not eating at all.

Now that's a sustainable message we want to hear!

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