



Chronic Use of Non-Medical Abdominal Compressors: Medical and Psychological Implications

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Background/ Purpose

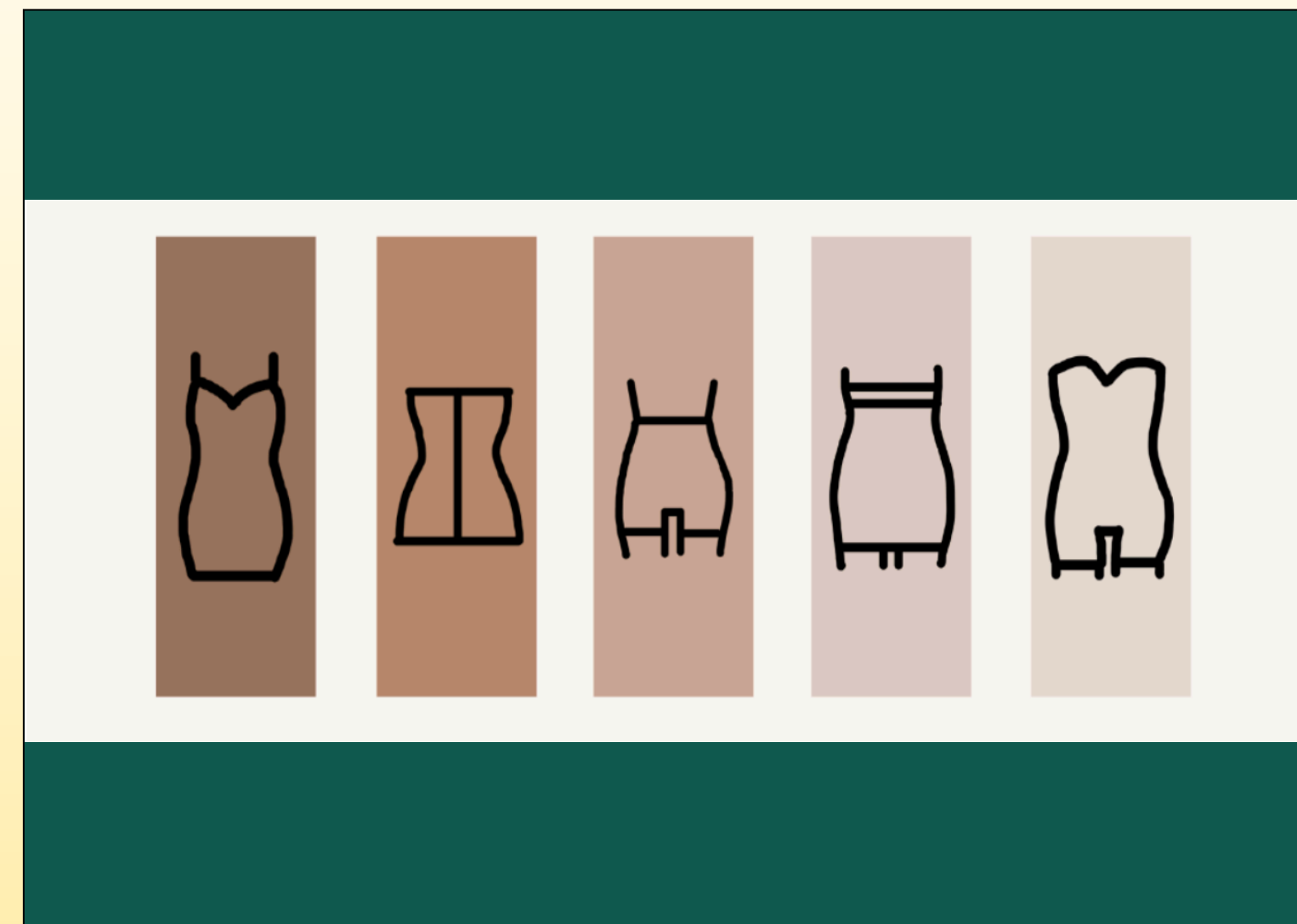
The popularity of waist cinchers, shapewear, abdominal binders, corsets, and waist trainers has increased in the population. Although corsets have been part of western fashion since the 18th century, abdominal compressors remain in style even today. In 2018, sales for shapewear worldwide were estimated at 2.26 billion USD. Despite its popularity, shapewear safety and medical effects have not been widely studied. The purpose of this study is to describe the population of women that choose to wear shapewear and aims to:

- ❖ Better understand modern-day usage of shapewear
- ❖ Assess why women wear shapewear and their shapewear usage habits
- ❖ Assess for medical associations and potential complications with acute and/or chronic abdominal compression
- ❖ Evaluate if certain psychological conditions increase the use of abdominal compressors

Experimental Design/ Results

1. Develop an assessment to gather information on the inquiring topics discussed above.
2. Recruit participants between the ages 18-80 years old over a certain enrollment period using sampling methods via selected virtual platforms.
3. Survey distribution.
4. Results will be analyzed to determine outcomes associated with wearing abdominal compressors.

Results: Not yet available as we are in the IRB process.



Discussion/Importance of the Study

Despite commentary, evaluation, and recognition of medical side effects with chronic use of shapewear and abdominal compression garments, there is a paucity of literature that describes who wears shapewear and associated adverse effects from shapewear use. Shapewear is currently thought to be linked to:

- Allergic reactions of the skin, possibly associated to the chemicals found in the fabric that give waist trainers their stretch.
- Constriction of blood circulation for wearers to purchase abdominal compressors smaller than their size.
- Pelvic organ prolapse in woman older than 50 due to the increase in abdominal pressure.
- Bloating due to the inability for the intestines to propel digested foods properly.
- Gastric reflux due to gastric contents inability to propel properly.

This adds to the aim of this study: to verify these findings and identify other possible health consequences of abdominal compressors.

Future Studies

- Future studies should aim to create an educational tool to participants who indicated that they wear abdominal compressors.
- The effectivity should be measured using a knowledge assessment that would allow adequate measurement of the information they gained from the tool.
- The overall goal would be to educate participants about the effects of abdominal compressors on their health.

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