

## Beauty spot

# The nap of luxury

I had tried everything – countless caffeinated beverages, energy bars and the occasional lunchtime spa treatment – but come 4pm every day it hit me: full-on fatigue.

This meant Google-glazed eyes, limbs stagnant with a rigidity one normally experiences halfway through a transatlantic flight, mind-clogging exhaustion, the dark circles around my eyes beginning to defy even YSL's Touche Eclat. So when I heard about the EnergyPod, developed by Google, Procter & Gamble and Cisco Systems, I booked myself an appointment.

The world's first chair designed specifically for napping, the

EnergyPod is the invention of Arshad Chowdhury and Christopher Lindholm, a former investment banker and healthcare economist respectively.

Available at Urban Retreat at Heathrow's Terminal 1, Virgin Active Health Clubs and the W Hotel in San Francisco and costing from £9 for 20 minutes, the EnergyPod looks like a dentist's chair aboard the Battlestar Galactica.

A reclining seat is topped with a large Pacman-esque dome visor and you climb in much as you would for a routine teeth cleaning: reclining awkwardly and struggling to shield your eyes from a brazen light

while nurses clad in teddy bear-printed scrubs encourage you to relax.

The clock is set for 20 minutes – the ideal length of time for a nap, as this amount is enough to boost creativity, memory and other mental faculties, according to a recent study carried out at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Feet are elevated to maximise circulation and soothing tones are piped in.

My inner sceptic soon slid effortlessly into the "first" stage of sleep: a relatively light state of relaxation during which one is mostly conscious. A twitch (in my case, a small but definitive quiver from

my left foot) heralded the beginning of the deeper stage two sleep; and I felt myself gliding towards the brink of sound slumber.

Before any rapid eye movement could occur however, an LED-simulated dawn broke and some gentle vibrations announced that my naptime was over.

Although I never completely nodded off, I sprang from the EnergyPod with grasshopper-like alacrity!

OK, that's an exaggeration. But I did feel surprisingly well rested.

**Kristin Knox**

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