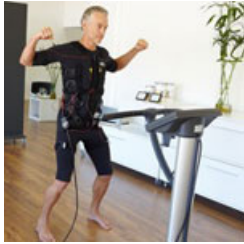


# Beat the bulge with Bodytec

 By [Natalie Swain](#)

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Bodytec claims to offer a revolutionary alternative to regular exercise. This may be music to the ears of the gym-weary and the gym-wary alike. Bodytec could be the ideal ally in the fight against packing on winter weight. Marrying exercise and technology, Bodytec combines personal training with electro muscular stimulation (EMS). The stuff that dreams are made of, Bodytec claims to effectively reduce your body weight, gently define your muscles and increase physical strength and endurance, all in only 20 minutes a week.



It sounds unbelievable, but according to research from the Bayreuth University in Germany, 20 minutes of Bodytec-type training is comparable to three strength-training sessions in a conventional gym. Further benefits include relief from back or muscular pain, rehabilitation after injury, and increased fitness and endurance. But what is the experience really like?

When I was offered a free trial session at Bodytec, I must admit I was somewhat sceptical. I have tried it all - personal trainers, tiger crawls, you name it. And kettlebells - I twitch at the very mention of a swing, a snatch, or a clean. While I used to be very active and involved in a number of sports, my physical exertion has declined to the point where, yes I admit, I have frozen my regular gym membership. This is probably because I have grown tired of dreading various forms of cruel and unusual punishment, and because my efforts never seem to be good enough - I have been told by trainers that if you want tangible results, you have to slog it out every day to get them. But the more I chase results, the more they seem to elude me. So the idea of attending only one 20-minute session per week seemed too good to be true. Nevertheless, I decided to shelve my scepticism, and dusted off my trainers.

## A warm welcome

At the Newlands Bodytec, I was welcomed by the very friendly and personable managing director and trainer, Troy Kilshaw. The client before me, a doctor, was still busy with his session. I was given a personal information form to fill out, and tried to bury myself in it despite my soaring curiosity levels, so that I would not be sitting staring at the poor doctor while he did his workout. I knew I wouldn't want someone watching me.

I was then met by Tara McGovern of Eclipse Public Relations, who assured me she would stay for the duration of my session, and would herself be trying out Bodytec in the near future. Tara made me feel totally at ease and supported in my new experience, so I didn't mind that I would now have an audience after all. Meanwhile, I couldn't help noticing that the good doctor was working up quite a sweat - uh oh. Would I cope?

When it was time for my session, Troy came over and discussed the finer details of EMS, and explained what my session would entail. I would need to don a skin-tight number, underneath a special vest fitted with electrodes and various EMS pads, all provided by Bodytec. He cautioned that I could not undertake this activity if I had a pacemaker. For a brief moment, I wished I did. Such is the way of the lazy.

## **Don't forget to breathe**

Once I was kitted up, Troy helped strap me into the EMS vest and pads. It felt a bit like I was wearing a corset, so I allowed myself a brief fantasy that I was an elegant corseted lady rather than a guinea pig about to have the life shocked out of it, or so I thought. Troy then slowly introduced me to the sensation of EMS, one muscle group at a time, a sensation which I can only describe as a kind of gentle buzzing that spreads through your muscles. Troy set the machine's levels appropriately so that I would be comfortable and was not overwhelmed by the sensation of having my muscles stimulated for the first time in, well, years. So no, there was no electrical shocking involved. After all, this is EMS, not EST or ECT, people!

Troy showed me a few movements that I would be doing, and we practised them a few times before embarking on my 20-minute journey into the unknown. The session consisted of movements such as squats, lunges, bicep curls and arm raises, which I was to perform in intervals with a four-second break in between. I found that I was so distracted by remembering to tense my muscles and perform the (simple) movements that I completely forgot to breathe. Luckily, Troy reminded me that it was wise to breathe, so there was no ladylike swooning for me this time.

## **High-five!**

And, would you believe it, I completed the full 20 minutes. Once the clock had ticked down to zero, I shared a heart-felt high-five with Troy. And just like the good doctor, I had worked up quite a sweat. I was positively glowing. I felt alive, like my muscles had been woken from a deep, deep slumber. I felt a sense of achievement - I had tried something new, and it was actually good for me!

Troy warned me that I would probably be stiff in the next two days or so. At the time of writing, I am experiencing a gentle stiffness in muscles that could definitely use some toning, so I am more than pleased to be fully aware of these physical sensations. You would never believe I didn't do a hundred sit-ups to earn the tightness in my abs. As for my arms, who needs clean-and-presses. Indeed, the trauma of kettlebells is but a dim and distant memory.

And as for the future - who knows. Maybe, just maybe, I will laugh off my laziness, turn over a new leaf and put my health and fitness first by joining Bodytec. I would be more likely to stick to it than my other recent fitness efforts. After all, 20 minutes once a week is entirely manageable, and, judging from my stiffness, effective. So... watch this space! There may be a leaner, meaner me coming to town soon...

For further information on Bodytec, go to [www.bodytec.co.za](http://www.bodytec.co.za).

## **ABOUT NATALIE SWAIN**

Natalie is a sub-editor at Bizcommunity. She studied a BA Honours in English and an LLB, and is a qualified attorney.  
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