

Scottsdale's HYPOXI: A First-Person Account

Written by Melissa Larsen



When I was told it is possible to achieve targeted weight loss, my first thought was, “Where do I sign up?” My next thought, “Wait, are you sure?” The folks at HYPOXI are surely no strangers to skepticism—and they are also no strangers to making people believers.

For nearly 20 years, HYPOXI has been a household name in more than 60 countries. With the fall opening of a studio at Scottsdale's Seville plaza, HYPOXI marks its first outpost in the United States, with a Biltmore Fashion Park studio opening later this year.

So, just what is this seemingly magical place? It is “a low-impact exercise method that is three times more effective at burning stubborn fat than traditional exercise. Through [HYPOXI's] advanced vacuum and compression technology and healthy nutrition, HYPOXI activates your body's natural system to burn specific areas of fat and cellulite.”

Low-impact exercise? Burn specific areas of fat and cellulite? HYPOXI might seem too good to be true, but after completing the recommended 12 sessions, the results are impossible to deny.



On my first visit to HYPOXI, I was introduced to the four machines that are utilized in HYPOXI studios: the Dermology, which reduces puffy skin, cellulite and uneven skin tone; the Vacunaut, which targets fat in the stomach via treadmill exercise; the S120, an enclosed stationary bike that targets fat in the lower stomach, hips, buttocks, thighs and lower back; and the L250, a lay-down stationary bike that targets the same problem areas as the S120.

In order to understand what my goals are—and, thus, what machines I would be using during my sessions—the first visit also included a consultation with my HYPOXI coach, a staff member who leads clients through the fitness journey. Body measurements were taken, as well as a 3D body scan which allows users to see a 360-degree avatar of their body (which, in itself, is a really unique experience that I haven't seen anywhere else in the Valley). At this time, we also discussed diet and body areas that I wished to improve. Though standing in your skivvies in front of a stranger for measurements isn't anyone's idea of fun, the coaches at HYPOXI are warm, welcoming and eliminate any awkwardness from the situation.

For HYPOXI newbies, it is recommended that you start with 12 sessions at three sessions per week. The machines are 20 to 30 minutes per session, and, in my case, it was recommended that I do a combination of two machines per session.

My first experience with a HYPOXI machine was with the Dermology. This is the only machine that doesn't require any exercise or effort; basically, you lie there. You can take a 20-minute nap, if you'd like. You step into a large suit (from neck to toes) before lying down and being plugged into a machine that applies negative and positive pressure. The first minute of the Dermology process was a little nerve-racking, as it feels like being given a giant bear hug from your chin down. It is a tight squeeze. (Those with claustrophobia issues might want have a difficult time with Dermology.) However, after that first minute passed and I became used to the feeling, the sensation was much more calming, more relaxing. From then on, I looked forward to my thrice weekly Dermology sessions. I mean, where else are you basically forced to lie down, listen to spa music and relax for 20 minutes?

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In my first session, I followed up the Dermology with a go at the Vacunaut. I slipped into a zippered unitard and then into a scuba-type suit, which was then plugged into a machine that, like the Dermology, applies negative and positive pressure. I then stepped on a treadmill and walked for 30 minutes. The Vacunaut definitely gets its users sweating, great for ridding the body of toxins and lymphatic drainage. And though the suit is heavy, the workout isn't difficult, even for someone who doesn't exercise on a regular basis. However, the tightness of the scuba suit caused breakage of blood vessels on my skin; though that result isn't typical, I learned that some people have more sensitivity to the pressure. So for my next session, my coach and I opted to change my course of action and try the S120 instead.

The S120 is essentially a stationary bike that is nestled into a pod that allows vacuum and compression intervals. (Your upper body is out in the open, which allows you to toy with your phone or read a book.) Instead of a full suit as with the Vacunaut, I slipped into a "skirt" made of scuba material that clicked into the pod. In addition to targeting the fat in the lower body, the S120 also reduces fluid retention and helps eliminate cellulite. As with the Vacunaut, the workout itself is a breeze, though it still produces a good sweat.

Though the machines do a great deal of the work for you, it is important to follow the HYPOXI diet guidelines as well. Prior to your HYPOXI appointment, it is recommended that you consume a snack or meal with a moderate amount of carbs to provide energy for your session. Post-session, don't eat for at least two hours and be sure to limit your carbs for four to six hours afterward. Also, no caffeine or alcohol after your session. Overall, and as with just about any wellness plan, try to maintain a diet of clean and healthy eating to achieve and maintain your desired results.

After six sessions, my coach once again took my measurements to gauge my progress. Halfway through my sessions, I was already down 3.5 inches, mostly in my hip area. At 12 sessions, I was down another 5.25 inches (this time, with a big difference in my stomach measurements). Thus, my grand total was 8.75 inches lost. And though losing pounds is not the goal of HYPOXI, it was a nice bonus to have lost nearly three pounds, as well.

Though I entered into the HYPOXI experience with a bit of skepticism, as I am sure most people do, I finished my experience as a believer in the product. The coaches make it a fun, non-intimidating experience to take part in three times a week; the workouts are suitable for those of any age, body type or fitness level; the studio itself is open, airy and modern, yet private enough to complete your workouts in peace; and, finally, the results simply speak for themselves.

Packages start at \$684, with training sessions as low as \$42 per session. hypoxibody.com.