



Scent-sensitive fashion: the second-skin garment releases relaxing aromas to counter stress

The fear of smelly armpits could become a thing of the past thanks to the development of a new "smart" dress that releases perfume in stressful situations, writes Anna Fazackerley.

Jenny Tillotson, a senior research fellow at Central St Martin's College of Art and Design, has created a dress that mimics the body's circulation system, the senses and scent glands.

Eventually, the dress, a prototype of which is on show at the Cheltenham Science Festival this week, will emit a selection of different scents in response to the changing mood of the wearer. The idea is that they will be able to refresh their scent throughout the day without the need for a perfume bottle.

Dr Tillotson said: "At the festival, I am experimenting with dif-

A fragrant frock for exam time

ferent smells that people will recognise: not Chanel No 5, but peppermint, lavender, chocolate and even Play-Doh to stimulate memories of childhood."

The initial research into the "smart second-skin dress" has been funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board. But Dr Tillotson is trying to secure additional funding from other sources to develop similar ideas using scents.

One possibility is bedclothes that sense when a person needs arousing and release sexy pheromones to put them in the mood.

Dr Tillotson also hopes to develop "wallpaper": wallpaper that can detect if a person is unhappy or stressed and release an uplifting scent while changing colour accordingly.

Dr Tillotson is working on miniaturising her technology so that it could potentially be used anywhere — even in book spines to shape people's reading experiences.

But she said that so far scientists have been much more responsive to her research than perfume companies. "The fragrance industry still feels this is all a bit wacky — more like science fiction," she said.