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Q. My boyfriend wears pantyhose in public, even with shorts. He says pantyhose on men is a trend. Is he goofy or in style?

A. He may be ahead of his time - except for the shorts. Thousands of men wear pantyhose for nonsexual reasons (that is, they are not crossdressers). One major supplier is G. Lieberman & Son's, whose CEO Steve Katz, began marketing to men in 1999 after trying on dozens of pairs of women's nylons and noting what he didn't like about their fit. The result is a durable hose with a fly, longer legs, lower waist band and more room for the male package. Katz and his wife launched comfilon.com to sell hose as a fashionable alternative to socks and long underwear for men who have the "nylon gene," or as a practical one for warmth, circulation or to avoid contact with itchy wool pants. They also created a more macho site activskin.com to target cops, construction workers, truckers, athletes and soldiers in Iraq (to protect against sand fleas). In fact a pair kept us ventilated and compressed while answering your letter. That's startling only in that we usually go commando.