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'Put on your lactating fake breasts, bra and lie down': Inside the bizarre 'Mr Mommy' class where men experience the pain of childbirth, BREASTFEEDING and... changing a dirty nappy . Men in China are going through the ten-day Mr Mommy course to empathise with what new mothers go through They experience pain of childbirth, breastfeeding, sore nipples, burping, and nappy changing with soy sauce poo Course is to make fathers 'more considerate', especially those men who are nagging partners to have second child MailOnline reporter strapped on a pair of lactating fake breasts and stomach clamps too for the gruelling course By JAMIE FULLERTON IN SHANGHAI FOR MAILONLINE **PUBLISHED:** 10:56 GMT, 28 August 2015 | **UPDATED:** 13:05 GMT, 28 August 2015 Share

seventh-floor flat in west Shanghai.

named Zhivi.

Two plastic baby dolls bearing mildly demonic grins are lying on the bed next to a maternity bra and two pink, jelly-like half-spheres. I'd say they are probably C-cups. 'Please put on your breasts, bra and pyjamas and lie down,' says Mrs Jiang, founder of Zhaimom, an online hub that offers consultancy services for My 'Mr Mommy' experience, which I had signed up for through the company, is about to begin. I heard about Mr Mommy earlier this month through reports about three men signing up to it for ten days of simulated breastfeeding, baby burping

In the next 24 hours you will experience a typical Chinese new mother's life after delivery,' reads the letter I am handed as I arrive in a nondescript

As I step into a small, sparsely furnished bedroom, Jane Jiang, my friendly host, introduces me to a lactation consultant in a medical-style dress

Gruelling: MailOnline man Jamie Fullerton (pictured) is strapped on two fake silica gel breasts as he feeds to baby dolls on the bed in China's bizarre 'Mr Mommy' experience

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Painful: Jamie has two big blue nipple clamps attached (pictured) to simulate the pain of a baby biting down during breastfeeding

gel breasts hidden underneath his patterned pyjamas

'Low-budget Mrs Doubtfire': Five minutes after entering the flat in Shanghai, Jamie (right) is lying on the bed with silica

(O) +24 Reality check: The Mr Mommy course simulates every aspect of being a new mother, including breastfeeding (pictured) a pair of fake babies and nappy changing **MORE VIDEOS** Frustrated female futsal player kicks opponent in the head Cyclist captures road-rage drivers shunt in to car on camera Hungry crocodile tears off fellow croc's leg and devours it Aerobics teacher's fierce dance to Beyonce's Single Ladies SHARE THIS RELATED ARTICLES

ARTICLE Man fitted with 'bionic The 9 health symptoms Welcome to the China men should NEVER penis' reveals he kept Urine Therapy Share his lack of... ignore, from problems... Association: A The course is designed to give men a taste of what becoming a mother is like in China, and Mrs Jiang agreed to let me undergo it for one day to get a glimpse of life with a newborn baby. The course was not designed to be fun. 'Due to old Chinese traditions and misunderstandings postpartum life is usually not very happy,' my welcome letter continues. 'We hope families, especially fathers, can be more considerate through changing their roles.' One Chinese tradition is to keep new mothers indoors for up to two months because exposure to wind is believed to be dangerous for them. Accordingly, the three Mr Mommies who preceded me were not allowed to leave the apartment they were assigned to for the duration of their course. The custom is known as 'zuoyuezi', which translates to 'sitting the month'. It was put further in the spotlight earlier this month when a Shanghai mother who was strictly observing it died from heat stroke. She died after keeping her air con turned off and wrapping herself in a thick quilt in the face of soaring temperatures. Perhaps more concerning than my imminent confinement is the prospect of the childbirth pain simulations the men endured. Before I began my stint, Liang Guotao, one of the three original Mr Mommies, told me that clamps were attached to his stomach to help him understand birth pains a little better. 'It pushed me to the limit,' he said. 'But the pain women suffer during delivery is way stronger. The worst aspect was actually wearing fake boobs.' The three Mr Mommies were paid 10,000 Yuan (£1,000) each to take part in the scheme as promotion for the company. But motivations for signing up weren't all money-based. One of the men was told to go on it by his wife so he'd stop nagging her to have a second child. Mr Liang warned me not to expect leniency from my hosts.

Childbirth: Clamps are also attached to the men's stomachs (pictured) to 'help them understand' the excruciating pain of

childbirth

Agony: One of the original 'Mr Mommies' told Jamie how the pain of the clamps on his stomach 'pushed him to the limit' but admitted what women go through is 'way stronger'

Exhausting: After Jamie's fake babies, who he named Nathan and Jane, suckled for 15 minutes, a weighted pillow was

Learning curve: The course organisers made it very clear to Jamie (pictured) that it is not designed to be fun, but to help men experience some of the very serious conditions associated with childbirth, which men often misunderstand in

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placed on his legs to simulate tiredness



Nappy change: The fake, plastic babies were smothered with a mixture of soy sauce and flour to simulate the mess

Pride and joy: The Mr Mommies care for two plastic baby dolls over the ten-day course, while workers simulate the

Bedridden: Jamie (left) took the 24-hour course, but the full one requires men to stay indoors for ten whole days, in line

'We often find conflict between traditional Chinese culture and the scientific way, plus there's a load of pseudo-science about breast-feeding on the

'Seeing all this conflicting information, mums often feel very low. We initiated this experience to draw attention to these difficulties and postpartum

Many older generation Chinese believe that air conditioning is potentially damaging for new mums as it exposes them to a wind of sorts - a notion Mrs Jiang rejects. Yet to make my experience more realistic air con is banned for the Mr Mommy experience, making for a sticky time in the scorching

Many people in China also believe that showering can be bad for new mums because they think that cold water can contribute to illness. It's not

Hundreds of women gave us feedback. Some of the things they said were not scientifically-based but others were quite normal, such as having to

And so, around two hours after I 'give birth', one of Mrs Jiang's male staffers walks into the room holding an iPhone blaring out baby screech noise.

Mrs Jiang came up with the Mr Mommy rules and schedule after crowd-sourcing suggestions from mothers on the social media app WeChat.

made by real ones

sound of their crying on their iPhones

with Chinese tradition

breast-feed every two hours.

Shanghai summer.

depression, and to put men in their counterparts' situations.'

'I downloaded the audio file off the internet,' he says proudly.

uncommon for Chinese women to give up showers for up to two months after giving birth.

'We put up a post saying, 'Tell us what your experience was like and we'll get men to do it',' she says.

Up all night: As Jamie dozed off for the night, a course worker blared out the sound of a baby screaming from his iPhone, and he was forced to work out what was wrong with it O +24 Mrs Jiang came up with the Mr Mommy rules and schedule after crowd-sourcing suggestions from mothers on the social media app WeChat.

Creator: The Mr Mommy course was designed by Jane Jiang (pictured) who wanted to give Chinese men a taste of what

becoming a mother is really like

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(O) +24 Hazardous: 'It can often be easy for the breast to tear', says one of the workers told Jamie as she brought out the painful clamps (pictured) **MORE VIDEOS** Frustrated female futsal player kicks opponent in the head Cyclist captures road-rage drivers shunt in to car on camera Hungry crocodile tears off fellow croc's leg and devours it Aerobics teacher's fierce dance to Beyonce's Single Ladies I whip out my silica boobs once more and let Nathan and Jane go at them, one at a time. Zhiji tells me how to position myself on my side so my precious prosthetic infants are supported more than they are when I lie on my back. 'It can often be easy for the breast to tear', says Zhiji as the babies are laid down and the clamps are brought out again. She attaches them to my nipples. Again: a little pain, a little blood. My reward is a bowl of brown Chinese-style porridge. 'It's to aid digestion and milk production,' says Mrs Jiang, 'Remember, you can't eat proper solid food on day one because you've had a c-section.' Mrs Jiang explains that in Chinese society grandparents tend to pay a much larger role in the upbringing of children than they do in most western countries. Often they will be a child's main caregiver as both parents work full-time jobs, and as such family units tend to be very close. The recentlyrelaxed single child policy also contributed to this. According to Mrs Jiang, grandparents' involvement can lead to old-fashioned views about the aforementioned myths clashing with modern attitudes. 'We want to trigger discussion about this,' she says. My 24-hour experience is designed to reflect a few days of motherhood, so I am allowed solid food for lunch: pigs' trotters in watery soup. A small bath filled with tepid water, that probably doesn't have much less flavour than the soup, is brought in. I remove Nathan's nappy and find that, despite being made of plastic, he's made a right mess. Tina, a high heel shoe-wearing lactation specialist who clocks in as Zhiji's shift ends, explains that the brown paste around Nathan's nether regions is a mixture of soy sauce and flour. I get to work wiping, then it's bath time. As she deals with Jane, Tina shows me how to hold Nathan so his back and head are completely supported just above the water and I can use my free hand to wash him. 'Pay special attention to his bottom,' she says, spotting an errant soy fleck. Friendly helper: One worker helps Jamie, who has no kids of his own, change the nappy of his fake baby which has soiled its clothes

Help is at hand: Tina (pictured), a high heel shoe-wearing lactation specialist who clocks in as Zhiji's shift ends, instructed Jamie to clean up the faux baby's mess After drying Nathan and Jane and giving them fresh nappies Tina shows me how to gently massage them, starting around the eyebrows. 'You need to talk to them at the same time,' she says, 'Say things like, 'dear baby, I am mum, please don't cry', or sing them a song.' Nathan isn't crying - the guy with the baby-screech audio file on his iPhone is busy next door playing Angry Birds - so I don't feel the need to chat to The more you massage them, the more secure they feel,' says Tina, showing me how to work around the legs, arms and stomach but avoid the tummy button in case the recently-severed umbilical chord area is still tender. 'You are a good father,' says Tina, 'I can't believe you don't have kids of your own.' Her admiration wanes an hour later, though, when I move Nathan and Jane around the bed to make myself more space. 'If they were real babies you wouldn't be able to pick them up by their legs,' she tuts. The breast-feeding sessions, each heralded by a fanfare of iPhone crying, continue sporadically and Tina shows me how to burp a baby by patting its At 6pm I realise that I'm getting a bit whiffy - the combination of the heat and lack of air con is stifling. The fake boobs I've had pressed to my chest for nine hours aren't helping. I get red bean soup for dinner (the staff get McDonald's) and at 7.30pm, I'm warned that I should try to nap as I'll be rather busy in the night. This is not an exaggeration. At 8.45pm the most intense crying session of the experience begins as I am challenged to try to work out what is wrong with Jane. I eventually find that a tummy tickling method Tina taught me earlier, designed to ease a baby's stomach pain, causes the guy with the iPhone to press his screen and halt the screeching. He starts using the device to take more photos of my increasingly weary face instead. The three original Mr Mommies weren't allowed computer or phone access for the duration of their experiences. To my shame, due to crippling boredom I cheat and get on my laptop to watch TV programmes between feeding sessions.

Meal time: Jamie's reward for suffering the pain of nipple clamps was a bowl of brown Chinese-style porridge (pictured)

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