



Photos by PHIL

**Cheryl Clayton** of Vinings relaxes inside a hyperbaric tent at her physician's office in Roswell. She is undergoing treatment after plastic s

# If you ache, inhale pure oxygen and feel the magic



By **PAUL KAPLAN**  
pkaplan@ajc.com

The stars swear by hyperbaric treatments, so **Paul Kaplan** put his sore muscles to the test.

Of all the things I've been called in my so-called life, "new age" is not one of them.

So what am I doing inside this hyperbaric oxygen tent? Actually, I was drawn to Roswell's "newest health experience," as Dr. Miles Graivier bills it, by accounts I'd read of enhanced healing and stamina from the treatment.

Supermodel Kim Alexis swears by it. So do a lot of athletes, including John Smoltz of the Braves. Michael Jackson has one, of course.

But they can afford their own tents, which cost about \$30,000.

For the rest of us, the options are limited because the medical applications are still in their infancy. But oxygen treatments are increasingly popular for everything from post-surgical healing to chemotherapy recovery.

Graivier, who is a plastic surgeon, says it's especially effective following facelifts and breast reductions.

"Healing has a huge amount to do with blood supply, with oxygen getting to damaged tissues," he says. By

► Please see **PURE OXYGEN, ZH7**



**Cheryl Clayton** is helped out of the tent by **Megan Finc** and **Howard Goldstein**.

# Pure oxygen: A healing sensation

► Continued from ZH1

breathing pure oxygen, you help mainline blood supply to the skin and deep tissue.

So here I am, sprawled out in Graivier's new tent, breathing pure oxygen and waiting for a healing sensation to wash over me.

I'm basically healthy, except after my outings with Sadie, a disobedient mutt with whom I run or power-walk four times a week.

Sadie is as strong as a bull, and she yanks her leash like a lead sled dog in the Iditarod. My right elbow and shoulder are sore after a few miles.

I make a point of walking Sadie in the morning of my treatment.

"Perfect," Graivier says. The patients who report the fastest results from the treatments are weekend warriors with routine soreness, he notes. (At \$90 an hour, you might want to wait until you're good and sore.)

"The difference in myself now and 10 years ago is that Monday morning is a lot tougher," says Graivier, a 47-year-old weekend warrior himself. "To get in the chamber and have an hour treatment, the aches and pains are markedly different."

Cheryl Clayton of Vinings had five hyperbaric oxygen treatments after Graivier gave her a necklift and lip implant. Six days after the surgery, the nurses told Clayton she was healing like someone two



**Cheryl Clayton** was told that six days after surgery she is healing like someone two weeks out. She credits the hyperbaric tent.

weeks removed from her operations.

"The stitches by my ear are gone, and there are no scars," Clayton says. "I'm tickled to death."

So, in I go with my sore

elbow. The tent looks like a canvas mini-submarine, with a pillow and a soft mattress inside. It takes a few minutes to pressurize, and you get the sensation of being inside a jet that's taking off.



**Michael Jackson** and model **Kim Alexis** swear by hyperbaric oxygen treatments. They are popular for post-surgical healing and chemotherapy recovery.

Soon there's a hissing sound from the release valves expelling the bad air I'm exhaling and replacing it with the \$90 oxygen that's being piped in.

After about 10 minutes I feel lightheaded — similar to the sensation from laughing gas at the dentist.

I settle in with a magazine and start feeling a little sleepy. Several patients use the hour to catch up on sleep, says Howard Goldstein, who runs Graivier's oxygen operation.

I had emptied my pockets and left everything on a chair outside the tent, and after about a half hour I can hear my cell-phone ringing angrily.

Sorry, I'm busy.

After an hour, Goldstein unzips the tent and I step out. The throbbing in my elbow and shoulder are gone — completely gone. Goldstein says it could be a placebo effect.

I tell him I don't care. I had serenity, and I'm pain-free.

What's that worth?

PHIL SKINNER / Staff