

Fitness news

B = BEAUTIFUL BODY

Bored of sweating in the gym? Try these funky, new alternatives to leave you feeling invigorated. (We think the fact they all begin with B is just a coincidence!)

Ballroom dancing

Ballroom dancing can be a great way to tone up and lose weight. Not only that, it's likely to rocket in popularity when fab film *Shall We Dance*, starring Jennifer Lopez as a ballroom instructor, is released this month. Find out about classes near you at www.danceweb.co.uk/ballroom.

Ballet body

If strutting your stuff in a tutu is not your thing, but you want a toned body, like ballet-nut SJP, try Darcey Bussell's new book *Pilates For Life* (Michael Joseph, £14.99). Pilates is the exercise for ballet lovers – plus, you get private tuition from a prima ballerina.

Belly dancing

Make like Shakira and wiggle your tum. What better way to tone up your stomach? Dolphina, instructor to stars such as Minnie Driver, has produced a fantastic book *Bellydance* (Dorling Kindersley, £9.99). For more info, visit www.bellydancer.org.uk.

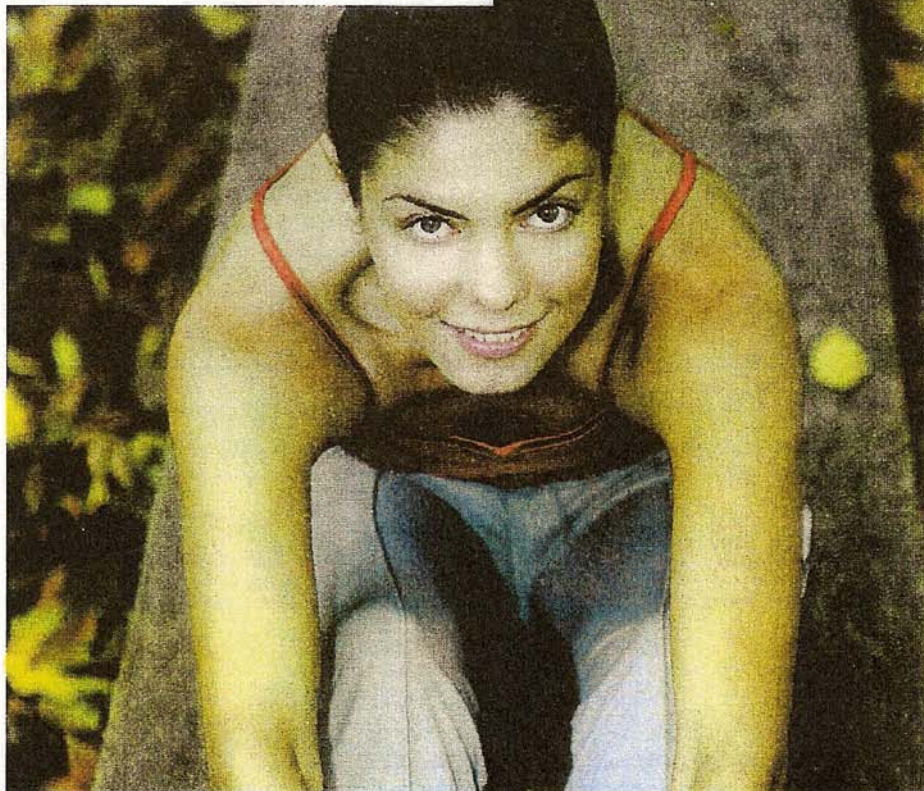
Budokon

This is a blend of yoga and martial arts moves sweeping the US. With celeb fans, like Jennifer Aniston, Budokon begins with Sun Salutations and fast-paced kicks and finishes with meditation – we can't wait to try it.

CREDIT

30 minutes low-impact aerobics

= 2 pancakes with lemon and sugar (150 calories)



Hit a hurdle?

If your race to fitness has hit a hurdle even Sally Gunnell couldn't clear, here's how to jump it

THE HURDLE

You can't afford the gym

Your classy wardrobe and fantastic social life can't support themselves. Something's got to give and the gym happens to be it.

Get over it: There are lots of alternatives that don't involve membership fees and pricey lycra outfits. A pre- or post-work run will put a spring in your step and get you in shape for summer.

THE HURDLE

You can't be bothered

You've got home from a long day, your flat is warm and the sofa is beckoning. The last thing you feel like doing is going to the gym.

Get over it: Go with a friend. It's harder to shirk your workout if you do it in pairs. Don't be tempted to nip to the pub afterwards and spoil all your hard work, though!

THE HURDLE

You haven't got time

You're rushed off your feet as it is, when you do have a minute to yourself, all you want to do is kick back and relax.

Get over it: Set your alarm earlier and walk to the station. A brisk 20-minute walk will burn off calories and you'll feel healthier. When you sit down to watch your favourite soap in the evening, why not squeeze in a few sit-ups, too?

THE HURDLE

You're self-conscious

The thought of exercising in a room full of cellulite-free bodies, makes you want to sink further into your sofa, with a handful of doughnuts for good measure.

Get over it: Buy an exercise video to do in your own home. You'll be able to go at your own pace and build your confidence.

HOW TO BURN MORE CALORIES INSTANTLY

- Incorporate bursts of high-intensity exercise, such as sprinting, into your workout, as intense moves burn more fat.
- Do weights before your cardiovascular workout; this stimulates your muscles and raises your metabolic rate.
- Increase the resistance on a rowing or running machine so you work harder.
- Hold in your tummy while exercising, this will work your abdominal muscles.
- Don't stand with your weight distributed evenly. Your core stabilisers will then work harder, utilising more muscles. >