


H O U S E H E A L T H Y O U T L O O K B L O G

Healthy Outlook Blog

Zumba Shakes Up Fitness

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By Lynn Langway | Posted May 4 2011

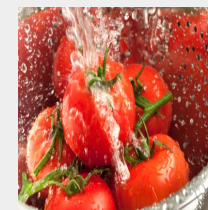
Guest blogger Lynn Langway, a former *Newsweek* editor, takes Zumba, Jazzercise, and spin classes in a futile effort to combat her restaurant habit. She writes regularly about health and travel. You can find her at lynlangway.com and [@travelcentricny](https://twitter.com/travelcentricny), as well as at the gym.

Blame it on [Jennifer Lopez](#) or “Dancing with the Stars,” but the Latin-flavored dance workout called [Zumba](#) has become the hottest trend in aerobics since Jane Fonda hung up her leg-warmers.

A B O U T O U R B L O G

Our blog is a collection of thoughts and stories that serve as inspiration for what healthymagination is—a shared commitment to creating better health for more people. It’s written by the people behind healthymagination, as well as members of our advisory board and guest contributors from around the web.

Y O U M I G H T L I K E



[Food Safety Myths Exposed | FoodSafety.gov](#)

Cooking meals at home is a great way to stay healthy and save money. But did you know that one in six Americans is expected to develop food poisoning this year? Following four simple steps helps protect your family from food poisoning, foodsafety.gov reports. And



Zumba blends hip-hop moves with steps from merengue, cha-cha, and other Latin dances—its catchy trademarked name is a play on “rumba”—and a 150-pound person can burn 400-600 calories in one fast-paced, 60-minute class. Created by a Colombian aerobics teacher and launched in Miami, FL as a



business in 2001, Zumba has since sashayed into 90,000 locations in 110 countries where

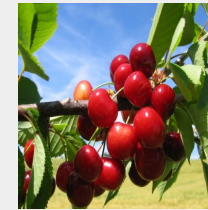
millions shimmy every week to an infectious mix of world music—salsa, reggaeton, Bollywood pop, and more.

Zumba follows in the successful footsteps of other aerobic dance programs—[Jazzercise](#), for example, is still going strong after 42 years—and has pumped up its profile with shrewd marketing. You can buy Zumba DVDs, music CDs and video games, dance at charity Zumbathons, enroll in the Zumba Academy for instructors or take Zumba classes designed for kids, seniors, and aqua-aerobics fans.

But the real power behind Zumba’s popularity may be the simple fact that it’s so much fun. “It’s the only workout I do that doesn’t feel like work,” says Alison Livanos, 31, who also jogs and spins regularly. She takes the same Sunday morning class that I enjoy in Port Jefferson, N.Y., where 20 of us, ages 20 to 65+—sometimes including an intrepid man or two—sweat happily to J-Lo, Shakira, and Daddy Yankee. There are no calisthenics or weights to lift, and the cheerful choreography is fairly easy to grasp. “Most everyone enjoys cutting loose on the dance floor at parties or weddings,” says our energetic-but-patient teacher, Samantha Davidson, 41. “Zumba brings that fun-loving vibe to fitness.”

Like other aerobic dance classes, Zumba can combat obesity and benefit your heart, bone density, and balance, says orthopedic surgeon Angela Smith, MD, a Fellow of the [American College of Sports Medicine](#). Dance can be even better for your body than running, she notes, because it fosters “quickness, agility, and flexibility” by using many different muscles at varying speeds. To avoid injury, she cautions, new students should start slowly and talk to the instructor about modifying steps to accommodate any knee or hip problems they might have. Dancers should also wear cross-trainers or dance sneakers with good arch support and roomy toe boxes. And they should pick shoes that allow smooth side-to-side movements—the better to glide across the gym without a glitch.

watch out for these common myths about food safety at [...]



Supplements for Natural Pain Relief

Common pain-relief solutions include over-the-counter painkillers known as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, NSAIDs, such as Advil and prescription pain medications such as Celebrex. The problem is, NSAIDs may cause side effects like gastrointestinal bleeding and ulcers.



Getting Older Can Make You Happier!

Wrinkles and gray hair notwithstanding, most people actually get happier as they get older, according to recent research. A study at the university of Warwick backs up earlier research showing that mental and emotional quality of life (QOL) go up after middle age, even as physical QOL goes down.

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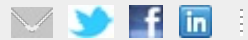
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Learn more about the benefits of aerobic exercise from the [American Heart Association](#). To find the right footwear for aerobic dancing, see this guide from the [American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine](#). Find inspiration to [break through your diet rut!](#) And to read about other healthy dance classes that both sexes can enjoy, check out our blog posts [“Do Real Men Take Ballet?”](#)



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Lisa Collier Cool

This sounds like a very fun way to get fit!

1 year ago

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Arzu Gosney

Great article!! Thank you!!!

Zumba Fitness also has a variety of sub programs as well as regular Zumba Fitness classes, such as Zumba Toning, Zumba Gold (for seniors), Zumbatomic (for kids), Zumba In the Circuit, etc. Pick a format that you love and enjoy the health benefits..:)

Arzu Gosney

O U R A U T H O R S



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