

ZUMBA!

by Audrey Turner

DISCLAIMER: To develop an exercise program that best suits your needs, please consult with your physician. It is important to talk with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

Zumba is a trendy cardiovascular exercise that has quickly stretched across the U.S. Its cardio movement gets your heart rate up for a prolonged period of time to improve your heart and lung function. Inspired by Latin music, Zumba is a low-impact, high-energy dance exercise. The dance routines in Zumba are not complex, and anyone can do them. Zumba can be fun and safe for all ages and fitness levels since the moves can be modified to your level of fitness.

Non-complex

Even though Zumba is categorized as “dance fitness,” a big part of the appeal for Zumba is the simplicity of it. The steps are very easy and rhythmic. There is no need to go step-by-step to try and learn the dance routine, you just keep moving and follow the instructor’s lead. Typically, Zumba uses three to five steps in one particular song and you keep repeating those steps. Just jump, shimmy, Mambo, Cha-Cha, Salsa and sway to the revitalizing Latin

beat! You won’t even know you are exercising!

Because Zumba is in such high demand, it is being offered in gyms and studios worldwide, with all kinds of classes ranging from the standard Zumba to Zumba for kids, Zumba Gold for seniors and even in water – aqua Zumba!

Fun and Safe

It is great when you find an exercise that does not feel like exercise at all! When you are having such fun, you forget that you are in an exercise class. Zumba is performed to very exciting, upbeat music. There is something energizing and empowering about finishing an exercise class like Zumba and walking out with the satisfaction that you conquered the steps and had fun while doing it.

Zumba is taught at all levels and can be modified for most limitations you may have. The instructor will generally teach at a medium or intermediate level but show you how to modify or change the movements to make it a beginner’s or advanced move. Since there is a lot of turning and pivoting on your feet, you need a shoe that is a bit flatter so you don’t stress the knees. You want to make sure your shoes are cross trainers due to the side-to-side movements. Do not wear a running shoe! Running shoes are

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meant to pitch you forward and are not meant for side-to-side movements.

For people with knee or lower back pain, you should talk with your doctor before joining an exercise class to make sure that Zumba is right for you. Once you have the “go ahead” from your doctor, talk to the instructor before the class so they can help you modify the movements to be safe for you. It’s about your workout! Don’t think that Zumba is an exercise just for women; there are many men who take Zumba in a group setting. So men, don’t be shy! You can Zumba too!

If you can’t or don’t want to join a group class just yet, you can find Zumba inspired DVDs to do in the comfort of your own home. Exercising at home can be just as effective as long as you have fun and work hard.

Remember, for sustained weight-loss, one should exercise for 60-90 minutes most days of the week. You do not have to do the 60-90 minutes all at once, so try breaking your exercise up into shorter bouts and different types of exercise.

Ready to Zumba?

Zumba is taught in an interval training manner, bringing the heart rate up for one song and back down for another and repeating throughout the class. This aids in the calorie burning component as well as allowing you to catch your breath during the slower song.

If you do Zumba or any other exercise at least three days per week, you can see weight-loss and/or lost inches in as little as two weeks and start to notice muscle tone in as little as six weeks. But even better than the muscle tone, weight-loss or lost inches, you will feel better and be able to do more of the things you want to do without getting short of breath.

NO MORE EXCUSES for not exercising! Zumba is a superb excuse to exercise! Let’s dance cha-cha-cha!

About the Author:

Audrey Turner is an exercise physiologist at both The Centennial Center for the Treatment of Obesity in Nashville, TN, and Centennial Medical Center Cardiac Rehab where she coaches patients pre and post-bariatric surgery, evaluates and educates patients post-cardiac stent and surgery, and designs personalized exercise routines.

Benefits of Zumba

Zumba aids in muscle tone by targeting just about every muscle in your body, and it helps with balance and coordination. You will have high-calorie burn (as much as 400-600 calories or more burned in one hour). By adding a consistent exercise routine (at least 30-45 minutes three to five days per week), you can experience some of these great benefits:

- Elevated aerobic threshold (defined as the exercise intensity at which anaerobic energy pathways start to operate)
- Increased energy in your daily activities
- Increased endurance during your exercise routine
- Increased bone density
- Better balance
- Increased muscle tone
- Less body fat
- Lower resting heart rate
- Lower resting blood pressure
- Better control of your blood sugar levels
- Healthier body weight
- Decreased anxiety and depression





ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
 - Community Discussion Forum
 - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



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