

WATCH YOUR BACK...

By Kristin Clark

It's the last day before spring break and the last chance to squeeze that final workout in. You're a little tired, and that dull pain that's been running from your right buttock down to the back of your knee is acting up again, but you figure, hey—NO PAIN, NO GAIN. After all, you're in a hurry to look GOOD. Who cares about how you feel? You arrive home and prepare to shower, but as you bend down to retrieve a fallen towel you feel something shift in the lower area of your back. The next thing you know you're doing your own personal rendition of an octogenarian with rheumatoid arthritis. Instead of spending your glorious spring break showing off the new you in the great outdoors, you spend your time in one of three ways: 1. Lying flat on your back with your feet draped over what quickly becomes an obnoxious looking footstool, 2. In your chiropractor's office (but hey, you've made a new friend...), or 3. Crawling to the bathroom on your hands and knees, grateful for the change of scenery.

I'm telling you this because no one deserves to have this much fun if they can possibly help it. Trust me—I know. You can also trust me when I tell you that your spine is nothing to mess with, because once you injure it in some way that weakness is there for life. Injury to the lower back is becoming more and more prevalent as a greater number of people are choosing to lead more active and fit lives. And while being fit is certainly a worthy goal, there are a few things that you should keep in mind.

— Pain is NOT normal. Pain is your body's way of letting you know that something isn't right. Trying to be an athletic animal and work through the pain isn't being plucky, it's being stupid. Stop when it hurts.

— Fatigue is another thing to be aware of. When your body is fatigued, it becomes particularly

vulnerable to injury, and any inherent structural weakness, especially in the spine, will become all too evident all too soon.

— Motivation. Are you exercising for your health or because you want to look good in your swimsuit? There is a big difference in attitude here. If you're health-minded you're going to be tuned in to your body and therefore more aware of the level of intensity that your body can safely and comfortably withstand. If you're thinking swimsuit or Speedo, you're going to be much more apt to push yourself beyond your limits in your rush to become Mr. or Ms. Universe.

— Competition. While working out with a partner can be very beneficial, it can also be very detrimental to your body. Make sure you find someone who has a similar fitness level as well as similar fitness goals.

— Patience is a virtue. Don't go onto the next level until you've mastered the first and even then increase your level of activity gradually.

— Choice and enjoyment. Choose something that you like to do so that you'll stick with it and avoid the trap of exercising sporadically or just enough to keep you body in a state of flux. Also make sure that the fitness routine you choose is a balanced and complete one where all major muscle groups are strengthened so that one set of muscles doesn't overpower another and lead to strains or worse.

— Flexibility is the key to a healthier and stronger spine and thus a healthier and stronger body. Just stretch in moderation!

Following this simple bit of advice will help to ensure an enjoyable spring break and hopefully keep you from having to suffer the indignities of crawling to the throne on your hands and knees.

Smart Snacking

It's 10:30 am. There are two hours to go before lunch, but you need to eat something now. What do you do? Run into the EMU and grab a jelly donut. Then sprint across campus, shoving the donut into your mouth in a matter of minutes. You arrive at your next class out of breath and wonder, "What did I just eat?" Does this scenario sound familiar? For many students eating three meals a day is impossible. Therefore we rely on snacks to get us through the day. Since snacking is inevitable, be careful and choose foods low in fat, high in carbohydrates and satisfying. A bagel, for example, tastes good, contains complex carbohydrates, and will fill you up with fewer calories than the jelly donut. Here are a few suggestions of alternative snacks to get you through those periods between meals.

Instead of jelly donut or danish
peanuts or almonds

potato chips
ice cream
candy

high fat crackers

Try bran muffin or bagel
low salt pretzels or air popped popcorn
low salt tortilla chips with salsa
low fat frozen yogurt
fresh fruit or applesauce with raisins
rice cakes with low fat cheese

You can make low fat muffins at home to combat a hunger attack. Also great are cut up vegetables with low fat dressing. Cut up fruit and low fat yogurt is a delicious snack alternative. Be creative and take time to either prepare or buy a low fat snack.

Remember to eat a snack when hungry. Just choose one low in fat, high in carbohydrates and something you like.

by Liz Wood

INDOOR TANS

"Are they really worth it?"

As a spring break approaches us, many of us will venture off to our favorite athletic clubs or tanning salons in lieu of that base tan we think we need before spring break. I wonder, "Are they really worth it?" Recent studies by the FDA and numerous epidemiologists have found that tanning beds have caused premature aging of the skin, skin cancer, and cataracts.

The trouble with these devices comes when there is direct skin contact with ultraviolet radiation radiated out through the tanning bed system. When a person decides to lay in one of these beds or stand in one of these booths, they will be subjecting themselves to two different kinds of ultraviolet rays (UV-A and UV-B). Studies have found that UV-B rays can cause cancer, so companies have modified their systems to cut out 95% of these rays. Now they are saying that these systems are "safe", but experts have mixed

opinions about this. One reason is that the filters used to block out the UV-B are not completely effective and the effectiveness may decrease with age. Now, recent studies have shown that UV-A rays are not good for the body either. Scientists have found that these rays penetrate the skin deeper than any other rays, including UV-B rays, which in turn can cause damage to collagen, blood vessels, and elastic tissue within the body. Experts also say that once a person is exposed to UV-A rays the body is more susceptible to the aging and carcinogenic effects of the UV-B radiation.

Tanning bed advertisers claim that these systems are safe, yet, there is growing evidence denouncing the safety of these devices. If you do decide to use tanning beds, take some

precautions. There are two important points that everyone should consider before entering a tanning bed or booth. First, you should make sure that you put on sunscreen, or at least on those parts that don't usually see the sun. Second, people should use protective goggles while in the bed or booth.

Also, if you are on any medication such as antibiotics, antidepressants, antihistamines, or any type of medication for acne, you should consult with your physician before tanning. Studies have found that people on these medications have an increased sensitivity to ultraviolet light sometimes resulting in severe sickness or even death.

So before using one of these systems, ask yourself, "Is it really worth it?"

By Rob Lindsey

THE DIET MYTH

By Susie Moseley

It happens about this same time every year. The sun comes out and with it comes everyone's fear of what they are going to look like in a bathing suit. Whether in preparation for Shasta or to catch some rays at Humpty Lumpy, it seems Spring is the time when all college students attempt to shed that extra winter pudge that somehow accumulated when we weren't looking. The campus is caught in a dieting frenzy—with some of the strangest diets at that.

I remember one Spring in high school when my best friend and I went on the "popsicle diet." Yep! You guessed it. We ate nothing but popsicles for three whole days. (At least we had a variety of flavors!) Living on nothing more than sugar water, we did lose weight, not to mention all of our energy once the sugar high wore off. Naturally, the weight came back and as an added bonus we even gained a few pounds. Needless to say, that was the last time we ever used that diet again.

Have you ever read in a diet book or been told by a doctor the mathematical explanation of the energy balance? If so, you were most likely told (and believed) that every 3,500 calories equals one pound of body fat. This means by eating 3,500 calories less than you need, in return you will lose one pound. Sounds good, but that's not quite the way it works.

According to Susan Kano in her book *Making Peace With Food*, experiments have shown that 3,500 "too few" or "too many" calories rarely results in the loss or gain of a pound. One study found that after increasing a caloric intake by average-weight men in a controlled setting that a large portion of the excess calories were burned off without an increase in exercise. In fact, the heavier the men became, the less weight they gained on the excessive diet. Ironically, a decrease of calories resulted in weight gain soon after the dieters returned to their normal diet.

What happens is the body strives to conserve energy in what it assumes to be a famine. The longer the deprivation, the more successful the body becomes at retaining energy (calories). The longer people stay on a low calorie diet, the longer it takes for their metabolism to return to normal.

Dieting predisposes people to rapid weight gain following the "famine" (as was the case with the infamous popsicle diet). The longer the diet, the longer the weight gain after the diet is over.

It has also been discovered that when people lose weight they lose both fat and protein, but what they regain is almost all fat—not a good trade off.

Basically, the main point of this article is this: Dieting leads to higher and higher weights and levels of fat—the opposite of its purpose. I am not advising that everyone eat as many calories as they can hold, just be sensible. Don't eat lots of food all at once like one or two huge meals a day, and definitely do not starve yourself! Instead, eat a little something whenever you are hungry so your body never goes into "starvation mode." You'll notice I didn't say eat whatever you want. Obviously, your choice of food makes a difference. Fruits, vegetables and whole grains are good any time of day and don't contain many grams of fat.

Try not to count calories. Calories are not what is important. If you're one who needs something to watch, keep track of the grams of fat—this is what really matters.

Drink lots of water. This gives your body the sensation of fullness as well as flushing and cleansing your entire system.

The next time you get caught up in the dieting frenzy remember, in the long run, the more you diet the more efficiently your body uses calories. The more efficient your body burns calories, the more weight you'll gain back after you return to your normal eating habits. So now you know the real diet story.

WHICH AEROBICS CLASS IS BEST FOR ME?

Low, high, high-low combo, step, funk, and aqua—ARGH! There're so many aerobics classes from which I am able to choose. How do I know which class is best for me?

In selecting an appropriate aerobics class, it is important to evaluate your needs. Are you prone to certain injuries? What is your ultimate goal in taking the class? What types of movement do you enjoy? What kind of music do you like?

Such questions may limit your options, or they may open up new ones. For instance, if you are susceptible to shin splints, want to improve your cardiorespiratory system, enjoy strong, basic choreography, and like top 40 music, step aerobics might be the class for you.

According to the Australia Council of Health, "lack of motivation is more often than not the answer, and motivation itself is surely the key to adherence to a successful fitness program. It has been estimated that up to two-thirds of those beginning an exercise program won't continue for more than three months." Thus, it is important to always have a goal as a motivating force. Many such goals include improving your cardiorespiratory system, relieving stress, and raising self-esteem.

The ACH claims there are three stages to fitness. The first stage is the "mildly discomforting" stage. Upon first entering an exercise program, the body is utilized differently. This can sometimes lead to soreness in the muscles or aches in the bones. This is a temporary stage, yet many participants abandon exercise for this reason because they think that exercise always means pain. Thus, external motivation is greatly needed during this stage to move the participant to stage two. The second stage is the "physical stage." This is when the participant feels good after his or her workout. The person in the physical stage is motivated both externally and internally. The third and most rewarding stage is the "psychological" stage. This is when the participant finds exercise enjoyable while they are doing it. "It becomes almost a form of meditation as the mind relaxes and the body moves into an easy movement pattern." This is when the individual truly enjoys exercise and no longer needs external forms of motivation.

Hence, important matters to keep in mind when selecting an aerobics class include evaluating the instructor. Will this person motivate you to come to class? Does he or she care

about your needs and offer educational information to further your interests? If not, find one who does.

With all of this information to think about, you're probably wondering what kind of aerobics classes there are to choose from. Here is a run-down to help you select one or more that fits your needs: Low-impact: In low impact one foot remains on the floor at all times. This is to help alleviate excess shock to the body. Large, exaggerated movement, focusing on the lower extremity is utilized to keep the individual in his/her training zone.

High impact: In high-impact aerobics jumping and skipping are frequent forms of movement used to keep one in his/her training zone. The music is usually upbeat and motivating and faster than the music in low-impact aerobics.

High-low combo: High-low combo classes usually make use of both high and low impact choreography to keep participants in their training zones.

Step (or Bench): Step classes are low impact and use a bench varying in height from four to twelve inches. Choreography is designed in various steeping patterns. Main emphasis is on the lower extremity.

Funk: Funk utilizes high and low impact choreography in order to bring individuals into their target heart rate zone. Popular dance moves seen on M-TV by artists such as Madonna and Hammer are performed in a progressive manner so that everyone can learn the choreography.

Aqua: Aqua aerobics is a non-impact form of exercise which uses the resistance of the water to get people in their training zones. For added resistance, participants attach hydrofit equipment to their ankles and can use floatable dumbbells. This is a great aerobics class for people who have not exercised in three or four years, or who are recovering from an injury. Heart rates usually are not in the upper portion of the training zone due to the quick cooling properties of the water.

If you are interested in trying one of these types of aerobic classes, visit a class and see if you like it. If not, try another; or if you're lucky, you might find more than one you like, and you could cross train between different aerobics classes. Recreation and Intramurals (RIM) and Service Physical Education (SPE) are great services here at the University of Oregon.

-Julie Miyamoto

Making a Splash

By Dave Johnson

Question: What do Carl Lewis, stroke victims, pregnant women, and land aerobic burnouts have in common? They are just a few of the many people enjoying the benefits of deep water exercise. This form of water exercise is not swimming, but vertical motion in deep water. Because the participant is supported by the water, they can have as gentle or as powerful a workout as they desire. This makes deep water exercise, more commonly known as aqua jogging, one of the few exercises that can be enjoyed by all ages and fitness levels.

Aqua jogging involves wearing a floatation device that makes the user buoyant in deep water. While aqua jogging, the participant is usually in an upright position and has full range of motion in both their arms and legs. Two factors make the water a unique and effective exercise environment. First, water is buoyant, allowing for greater flexibility and eliminating impact. Second, water is resistant, therefore the more powerfully you work against water the more powerfully it works against you. This provides the setting for an optimal workout for any individual, without any impact on the joints.

Aqua jogging can be done in many ways for a variety of reasons. An athlete can aqua jog to build



endurance and strength. An injured person can use deep water workouts as a form of rehabilitation and to improve their personal level of fitness while recovering. While aqua jogging, a person can tailor a program to fit their needs, such as during pregnancy, for weight loss or just for pure pleasure and recreation.

There have been many success stories that are attributed to aqua jogging ranging from remarkable physical recoveries, to vast improvements in athletic performance. One such story involved local track star Mary Decker Slaney. Slaney used an Aquajogger floatation belt after she got hurt following the Olympic Trials in 1984. For three weeks she simulated her land workouts while in the water. She then went on to set a world record in the 2,000 meters just two days after getting out of the water.

If you are thinking about how you might get into shape this spring or if you are looking for a refreshing alternative to high impact workouts, such as aerobics and running, give aqua jogging a try.

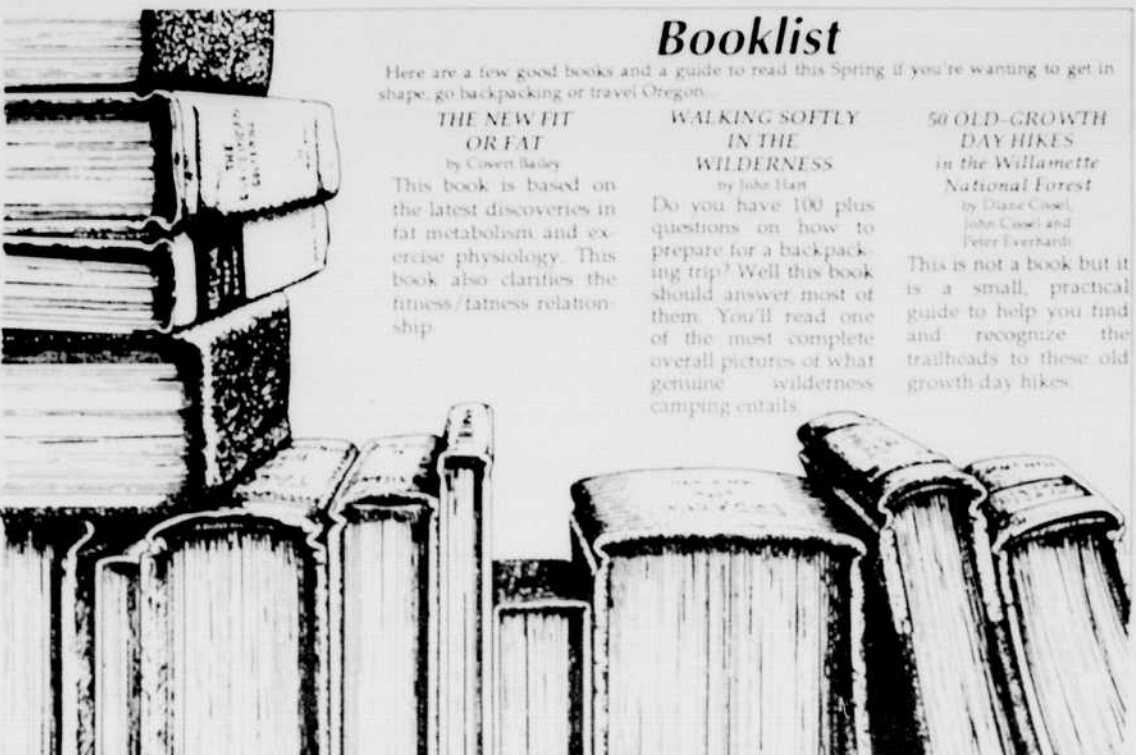
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Booklist

Here are a few good books and a guide to read this Spring if you're wanting to get in shape, go backpacking or travel Oregon.

THE NEW HIT OR FAT

by Corvett Bailey
 This book is based on the latest discoveries in fat metabolism and exercise physiology. This book also carries the fitness/fatness relationship.

WALKING SOFTLY IN THE WILDERNESS

by John Hart
 Do you have 100 plus questions on how to prepare for a backpacking trip? Well this book should answer most of them. You'll read one of the most complete overall pictures of what genuine wilderness camping entails.

50 OLD-GROWTH DAY HIKES

in the Willamette National Forest
 by Diane Cowie, John Cowie and Jean Forrester
 This is not a book but it is a small, practical guide to help you find and recognize the trailheads to these old growth day hikes.