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Forecast for 2007 fitness trends

By DAN VIERRA
SACRAMENTO (CALIF.) BEE

Just when you were getting to know the treadmill, along come predictions for the top 10 fitness trends for 2007.

Fitness never stands still. Making these predictions is the American Council on Exercise, which calls itself the largest non-profit fitness certification and education provider in the world.

The council tapped its worldwide network of certified fitness professionals to determine the top 10 fitness trends.

- Save money
- Train in small groups. Look for five or fewer people training together under one certified personal trainer. Probably more fun than working out alone, too.
- Affordable and alternative fitness options

People are seeking variety in their workout regimens, according to the American Council on Exercise. Walking, home gyms and personal trainers are among the recommended choices, although the latter two aren't as affordable as walking.

- Time-efficient workouts
- Got a busy schedule? Group fitness classes and training sessions will be 45 minutes or less. We're all familiar with fast food; now get acquainted with fast fitness.
- Specialized fitness programs for older folks

Walking just doesn't cut it anymore. The new workout regimen should be balanced and also address strength and flexibility to combat osteoarthritis and osteoporosis. A more limber body lowers the risk of everyday injury and improves overall quality of life.

- Fitness programs that target children

Obese kids need physical activity to shed pounds, and it's gotten to the point where parents can no longer ignore the problem.

- Personal trainers will take a team approach

Trainers will join with doctors and nutritionists to help prevent or reverse illnesses. The general thinking is that a coordinated team effort is far superior to the individual parts.

- More functional-fitness and balance-training activities

Foam rollers, wobble boards and balance balls will continue to be popular. The American Council on Exercise defines functional strength training (and/or core strengthening activities) as those that enhance balance, coordination, strength and endurance in everyday activities.

- Mind-body activities, such as yoga, Pilates and Tai Chi, will continue to be popular

Proper posture, breathing and body awareness are key elements of these activities. Meditation and relaxation are perks, too.

- Personal-trainer certification will become more important. Considering the American Council on Exercise's reason to exist, this one isn't surprising. However, all of us expect competent, qualified trainers to help prevent injuries and ensure all that work is actually being done right.

The council predicts that demand will increase for personal trainers with an accredited certification by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies.

Yoga likely will continue to be a popular fitness activity in 2007.



Foot pain can arise after years of walking displaces fat in feet, which acts as a cushion. Injections can plump up foot fat again.

CLIPART.COM PHOTOS



Rx for foot problems

Be good to tired dogs; they need a little TLC

By ELISE MINTON AND PAIGE HERMAN
NEWBEAUTY.COM

The average person takes 8,000 to 10,000 steps each day, so keeping your feet pretty takes more than weekly pedicures and beautifully polished toes.

Here are a few of the most common foot flaws and sole solutions.

Dry, cracked feet

A common problem, dry, split heels, arises from pressure put on the foot, which causes the fat under the heel to expand and tear the skin.

Prolonged standing and wearing open-backed shoes are the main culprits.

Treat yourself to a foot resurfacing treatment in a podiatrist's office. Feet are cleansed before they are exfoliated with a blade to remove hard, thick skin deposits.

A traditional pedicure uses a pumice stone and should never involve a razor.

A chemical peel is then performed on the feet, leaving them smooth and soft. Three to four treatments per month are recommended.

Yellow toenails

Toenail discoloration is usually caused by a fungal infection, which is highly contagious and resistant to treatment. Yellow toenails can also be caused by dark nail polish, but it's a good idea to get a diagnosis from a doctor.

Mild cases (a faint yellow) can often be treated at home. Start by filing the top and sides of the afflicted nails with an emery board.

Then, soak your feet in apple cider vinegar every day for three weeks and follow with an application of Vicks VapoRub or prescrip-

tion-strength topical cream (if provided by your doctor).

For moderate and severe cases — the nail is overly thick, crumbly, lifting and nearly all yellow — an oral antifungal prescribed by your dermatologist or podiatrist, such as Lamisil, is necessary to clear up the infection.

Pain while wearing heels

Years of walking can disperse or displace the fat in your heels, which acts as a cushion.

The average person puts two to three times their body weight on their feet each day.

Off-label use of injectable substances like Restylane, Sculptra and Radiessse can help put the bounce back in your step.

A numbing cream is applied to the bottom of the feet before the filler is injected into the weight-bearing areas. Since your feet will be numb for a few hours, it may be difficult to walk afterward, so arrange for a ride home.

Restylane usually provides immediate plumping, while Sculptra produces desired results in six to eight weeks.

While this treatment yields short-term relief from foot pain, it is not a substitute for surgical treatment that can permanently fix any foot deformity that's actually causing the pain.

Lowdown on toe shortening

You may have heard of toe shortening, an elective procedure that surgically straightens and shortens the length of the toes by removing portions of the bone.

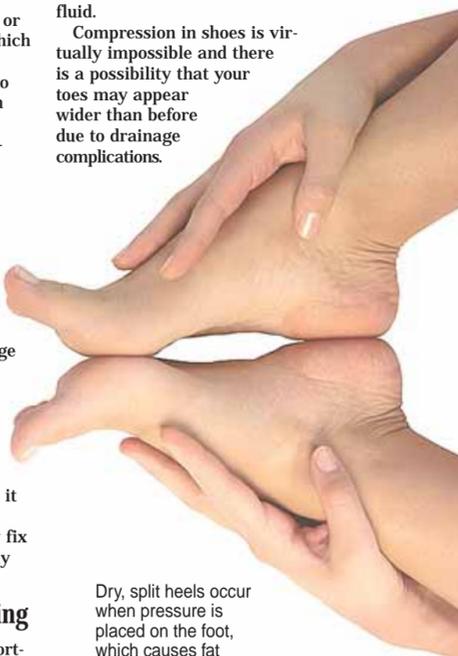
Many women are opting to undergo this surgery for the wrong reasons, simply because their feet do not fit properly into trendy open-toe shoes.

If intense pain and suffering from foot deformities affects you every day, you may be a candidate for some form of foot surgery.

It is important to consider the risks associated with this procedure and weigh your options.

After toe shortening, chances are your feet will remain swollen for almost six months, if not longer, since it is hard for the feet to drain fluid.

Compression in shoes is virtually impossible and there is a possibility that your toes may appear wider than before due to drainage complications.



Dry, split heels occur when pressure is placed on the foot, which causes fat under the heel to expand and tear the skin. Prolonged standing is one cause.

Chair yoga helps the infirm, obese become stronger

By JOSEPHINE MARCOTTY
MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL STAR TRIBUNE

There was a day recently when Dianne Jandt did something she thought she would never be able to do: She stood beside her wheelchair under a brilliant blue sky at the highest point of the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and spread her arms out into the tree pose.

"I felt so connected with the world and nature at that moment," she said.

If it hadn't been for chair yoga, Jandt, 61, never would have made it to the top of the hill, much less be able to stand there with her arms sweeping down along her sides like the

branches of red and yellow leaves that surrounded her.

A year ago she began adapting yoga to her own body, rather than vice versa, with a therapeutic practice called chair yoga.

Today, she is stronger, walking more, sitting straighter, and doing more every day despite her wheelchair and a right leg that's been paralyzed since a childhood bout of polio. She is an example for any infirm, obese or aging person who thinks exercise is beyond the realm of possibility. Just about anyone can do chair yoga.

"This is not about pretzel poses," said Jandt's yoga instructor, Megan Hatch. "I focus on making yoga appropri-

ate for the person."

Jandt's poses, familiar to anyone who does yoga, are modified to fit her body and capabilities. She does many from a seated position. When she assumes standing poses, she always does them on two legs.

Her paralyzed right leg, which felt completely disconnected from her body, also gets a workout of sorts.

"I visualize my leg doing the movement," said Jandt. "I'm seeing this leg going straight out; I'm seeing the foot moving up and down. It's feeling much more connected now."

Yoga, said Hatch, is about improving strength. But it's also about increasing body awareness.

She began teaching chair yoga about a year ago at the Institute for Health and Healing at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis. Her students have a wide variety of physical limitations.

Hatch uses chairs so students can remain seated, if necessary, or use them for balance while standing. She also provides massage tables so students can lie down without having to get on the floor.

LaDonna Rogge, 48, of Minneapolis started a class with Hatch after she had a hip replaced and to strengthen her body before knee surgery.

"If I can do yoga, believe me, anybody can," Rogge said.



Carol Juergensen Sheets

LIVE BETTER

Change your life: Just do it

Answer the following questions: Are you getting what you need out of life, or do you barely get by?

Do you see yourself as an advocate for you, or are you a victim of life's circumstances? Do you look for opportunities to get your needs met, or do you always think of others first?

Into which column do you fall?

In 2007 you can choose to make some lifestyle changes that will alter your life dramatically. It will require a plan. It won't just happen by wishing it into fruition. It will require a strategy to get you where you want to be. It will require three things:

- A new perspective: You own the power to change. In my work with people I remind them everything is a choice. When they say "I can't" I ask them to rephrase this to, "I choose not to" because it reminds them that they have the power and control.

- A plan: When you want to change, you have to learn to create an environment that supports this change. Too often, we want to change a behavior, but we don't have the infrastructure to support it. How can you design your life to make that needed change?

As you think about your goals, I would ask you to come up with a word that will remind you of the general change that you are going to make and the way that you would like to improve your life.

I would like for you to think of this word as your word for the year 2007. Many people have picked words like fitness, moderation, balance, family, fun or self care. Next, I would like you to write a goal statement about this word. Be specific with a plan.

For instance:

Nuturing: I will take better care of myself by getting to bed earlier and taking hot baths.

Sobriety: I will stop drinking by going to AA meetings and surrounding myself with other non-drinkers and my Bible.

Weight loss: I will eliminate foods in the house that trigger binge eating. I will write down everything that I eat.

Fitness: I will keep a journal of the activities that I will be integrating into my life and will put that journal somewhere that will remind me to chart my progress daily.

Family time: I will work less and enjoy my family more by taking my family to church, creating family dinners at home at least three times a week, and having a family night once a week.

This is the toughest part of the work. If you don't create a supportive environment, you return to old behaviors.

- Persistence: When you set out to achieve a goal, make yourself your No. 1 client. Put yourself first. That's not selfish, that's strategy. Let others know what to expect from you and, because you have programmed others to expect certain things, it's your turn to change those expectations.

If you set aside self-reflection time, don't let anyone disturb it. If you set aside time to go out with your friends, don't let anyone interfere with it. When you decide to create more family time, don't let the kids talk you out of it.

Many people can't afford a therapist or a coach to support them through these changes. Use this column as an opportunity to have your own personal coach.

Reflect on what it is that you really want. Design your goals and strategies and be persistent.

Evaluate your progress every 90 days so that you can modify your goals and make them more achievable. You are in control of your life.

I often ask my clients to buy a T-shirt that says "Just do it" and wear it under their clothes until they achieve their goals.

How many of you need that T-shirt as a constant reminder that you're important and that you can accomplish your goals?

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