

Consider Low-impact or Nonimpact Aerobics



Fitness activities that involve steady, rhythmic motions of major muscle groups and burn oxygen for more than a brief spurt are considered aerobic. They force your heart and lungs to work at anywhere from 60 to 85 percent of their capacity. Brisk walking and bicycling are examples of aerobic activities. So is aerobic dance—informally choreographed routines that combine calisthenics and dance.

Aerobic dance classes became the rage in the early 1980s, but shock to bones and tendons caused by repeated jumping and bouncing produced a number of injuries. Low-impact and nonimpact aerobics are kinder to your skeleton.

Low-impact aerobics are designed so that:

- Your feet stay close to the floor, and only one foot leaves the floor at a time.
- Only moderate jumping is involved.
- Jerky movements are kept to a minimum.

Nonimpact aerobics are designed so that:

- No jumping is involved.
- They rely on large muscles of the thighs (as in lifts) rather than muscles in the feet and calves (as in jogging and skipping in place).
- They require more arm movement than high-intensity aerobics.