

BALLROOM DANCE HEALTH BENEFITS.

May 26, 2011 | By [Lori A. Selke](#)

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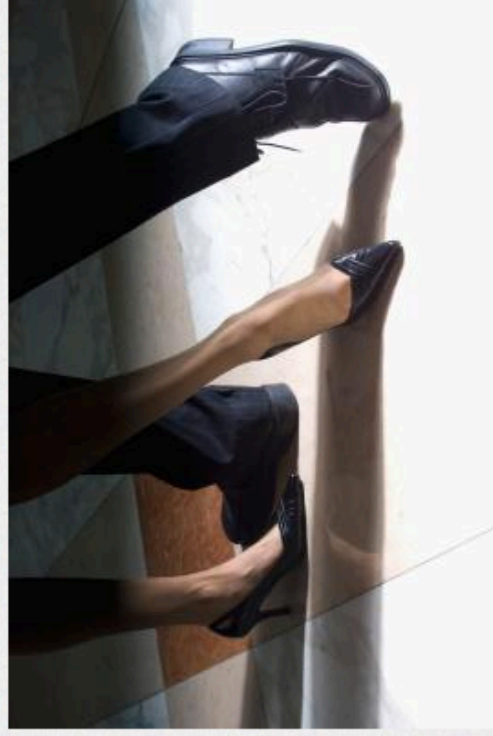


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Although ballroom dancing may not be as strenuous an activity as training to run a marathon, don't knock the benefits of regular movement and exercise. The U.S. Department of Agriculture considers ballroom dancing a "moderate" activity. It has some specific health benefits, too, that may not have occurred to you before.

MUSCLE TONING

Ballroom dancing helps tone and strengthen the muscles in your calves, thighs and buttocks. Specific ballroom dance moves work these muscles differently than more familiar exercises, such as walking, jogging or cycling, do. If you're performing a style that involves lifting or dipping your partner, you can also get a pretty good upper body workout. Ballroom dancing will also help strengthen the core muscles of the abdomen and back.

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CONDITIONING

Any regular exercise performed continuously for 30 to 40 minutes three or four times a week will help condition your cardiovascular system, strengthening your heart and lowering your cholesterol and blood pressure. It will also increase your lung capacity and your general stamina.

BONES AND JOINTS

Dancing is a weight-bearing exercise, so it helps maintain bone density and prevent osteoporosis. It can also help rehabilitate your knees after surgery, as it's lower impact than jogging or aerobics.

BRAIN FOOD

A 2003 study published in the "New England Journal of Medicine" suggests that social dancing has a special benefit for seniors: it reduces the chances of dementia. As it's an activity that one performs with a partner, it can also lessen loneliness and depression in the elderly.

CALORIES BURNED

Thirty minutes of dancing burns between 200 and 400 calories -- the same amount burned by swimming or cycling.

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