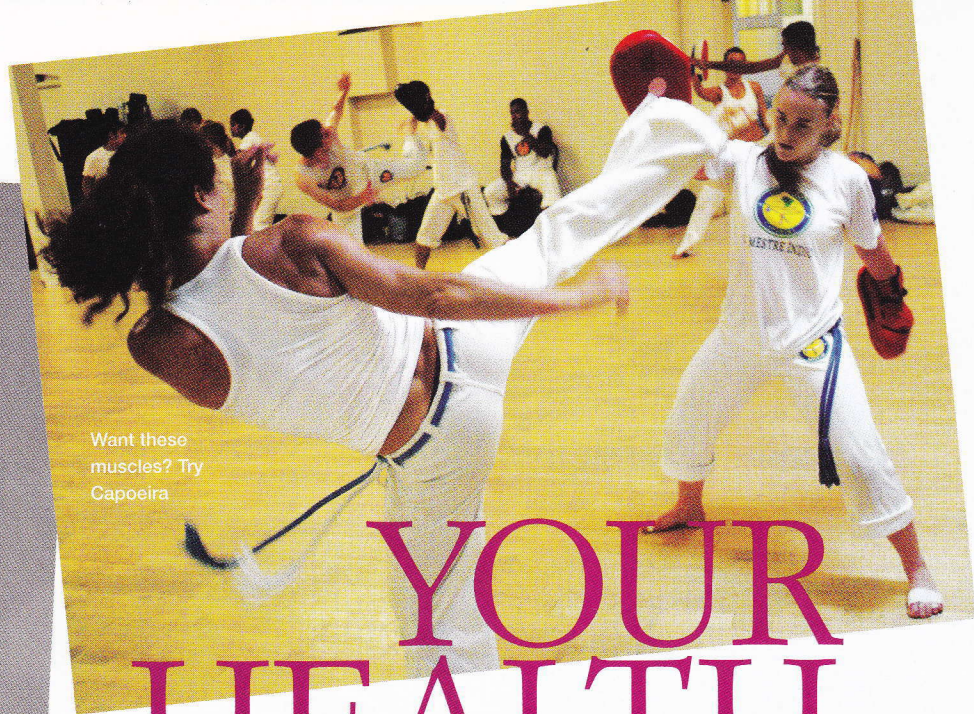




Aching Achilles: Remember to switch it up this summer - from wedges to flats



Want these muscles? Try Capoeira

# YOUR HEALTH

By Carly Baillie Krug

# A TO Z

**A**CHILLES tendons killing you? The sudden seasonal downward shift from high-heels to summer's trendy flats could be the culprit. The fix? Don't switch to ballet flats 24/7; instead, mix it up with a more substantive medium-heeled shoe every once in a while, such as the of-the-moment wedge.

**B**lame it on *Dancing with the Stars*, but **BALLROOM** is the latest fitness craze. Former *Melrose Place* resident Lisa Rinna was so taken by her turn on the show that she's opening her own L.A. studio. And since it takes two to tango, it's a great way to fit in a fun workout with your partner.

**C** If yoga is making you yawn, kick it up a notch with **CAPOEIRA**. Part Brazilian martial art, part dance and part aerobics, it increases agility, flexibility, strength and endurance. Beginners can try it at home with *Capoeira Conditioning: How to Build Strength, Agility, and Cardiovascular Fitness Using Capoeira Movements* by Gerard Taylor.

**D** Say it isn't so: *Days of Our Lives* may make you **DUMB**. A new study by researchers at Brooklyn College at the City University of New York noted that older women who watch daytime soaps are more likely to suffer cognitive impairment than those who don't. So play it safe: try kicking the habit now and switch to something a little more cognitively stimulating.

**E** The **EARLY** bird gets the better workout buzz. A recent study from The University of Glasgow in Scotland noted that women who did their cardio before their morning coffee reported twice the increase in positive feelings when compared to those who exercised after work.

**F** **FAT** got your tongue? As if a sweet tooth wasn't bad enough, a new study conducted at the Université de Bourgogne in Dijon, France, shows that people who get weak in the knees around french fries may be able to blame a "fat" taste bud. The sixth taste sensor (in addition to sweet, salty, bitter, sour and savoury) was discovered when researchers found that lab ▶▶

MODEL: PHOTOGRAPHY, MAX ABADIAN; LOCATION PHOTOGRAPHY, GABRIEL STEELE; EDITOR, TRACY PICHA.

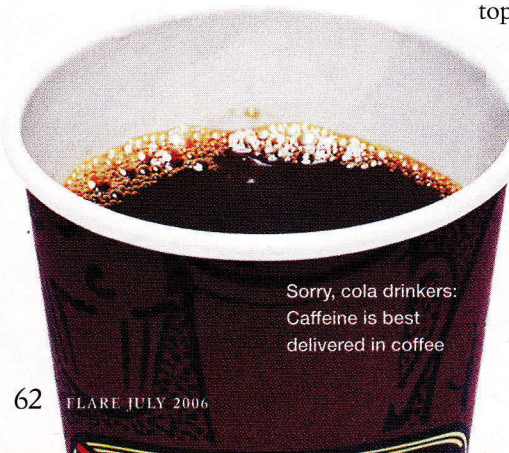
rats with the protein CD36 on their tongue preferred fatty over nonfatty foods.

**G**o **GREEN** or go home—and, yes, iceberg lettuce, we mean you. Skip the watered-down white stuff and toss dark greens such as spinach (with 421 percent more calcium, 440 percent more iron and 621 percent more vitamin C) into summer salads, say researchers at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

**H**UG a hottie today. Researchers from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill found that people who embrace often had higher levels of oxytocin, a hormone related to lower blood pressure that may help protect the heart from the wear and tear of stress.

**I**Suzanne Somers may be on to something with the ThighMaster, but there's another way to try that workout: you can target **INNER-THIGH** jiggle with an inexpensive 15-centimetre air-filled ball (pick one up at your local toy store). Place the ball between your upper knees, grip it firmly in place by squeezing your inner-thigh muscles, then perform traditional squats (for even better results, squeeze your buttocks, too).

**J**Get your caffeine kick from **JAVA**, not cola. According to a recent study by researchers at Harvard Medical School in Boston, coffee drinkers are less likely to develop high blood pressure than those who reach for regular or diet cola.



Sorry, cola drinkers: Caffeine is best delivered in coffee



Green is good: Don't bother with iceberg lettuce

**K** Instead of sweating over crunches inside an air-conditioned gym all summer, take your ab workout to the water. **KAYAKING** is nature's answer to the tummy tuck. With each stroke originating from the core and your torso continually rotating as you paddle, kayaking builds good posture and stability.

**L** Stress can get in the way of having a good time—literally. It can reduce the feeling of stimulation you get from those good **LIBATIONS**, according to a 2002 study from the University of Chicago.

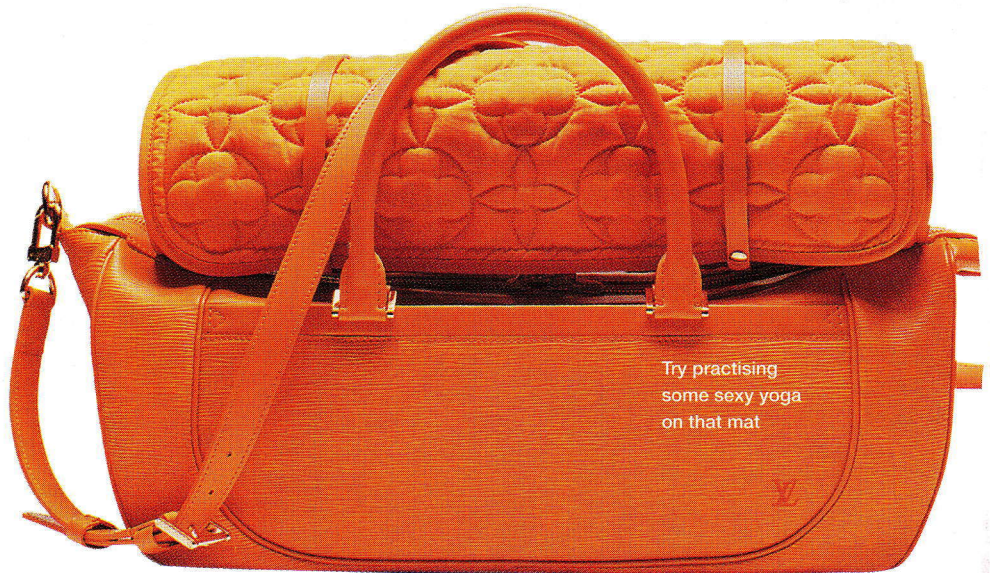
**M**Plane, train and automobile travel could be less comfortable during your period. A recent British study at Loughborough University in Leicestershire found women are more prone to visually induced **MOTION SICKNESS** during their menstrual cycle, especially on Day 5 (when estrogen and progesterone levels are lowest).

**N** According to a study conducted by the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, **NUTS** and seeds are rich in cholesterol-lowering phytosterols. Coming in on top were sesame seeds and wheat germ, followed by pistachios, pumpkin-seed kernels and sunflower-seed kernels. (Pine nuts, almonds, macadamia nuts, black walnuts, flaxseed and poppy seeds came in third.) But don't go too nuts; because they're full of fat (though generally the good kind), limit serving sizes to 28 grams or a small handful. ▶▶

**O** Do you wish you could bottle JLo's Mediterranean glow? The next best thing is **OLIVE OIL**: it's the hot new ingredient finding its way into face creams and body lotions. But don't thank Jenny just yet. The credit goes to the oil's moisturizing lipids and free-radical-fighting antioxidants, which may help combat environmental damage and signs of aging, according to a 2000 study from researchers at Japan's Kobe University School of Medicine, Kanazawa University and Nagoya University.

**P** Take it like a man? Sorry, not possible. According to researchers from the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in Springfield, females have more bundles of nerve fibres than males, which may mean that, despite similar injuries, women feel more **PAIN**.

**Q** Good news if you've only got time for a **QUICKIE**: new research from Sydney, Australia's University of Sydney



Try practising some sexy yoga on that mat

and University of New South Wales shows that doing reps faster during a one-set workout can make you stronger.

**R** Living with roommates does have benefits, especially if you're a **RUNNER**. Research from New Jersey's Princeton University found that lab rats who lived in a group benefited

from the stress-reducing aspects of running more quickly than those who lived alone. Living in groups also stimulated the faster regeneration of brain cells in the rats.

**S** Blister sufferers need to pull up their synthetic **SOCKS**. According to an ongoing study at the University of

Missouri-Columbia, 100-percent-cotton socks don't do well with friction or moisture. Give blisters the slip by introducing some nylon into the mix.

**T** Want to wear stilettos well into your 60s? Research from 2004 by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in Hung Hom, China, says older folk who practise **TAI CHI** have better balance than those who don't.

**U** It's not size but symmetry that matters. While few women can claim a perfect pair, those with **UNEVEN** breasts (a result of developmental disturbances) may be more likely to develop breast cancer, according to a recent study by England's University of Liverpool.

**V** Whether the girls are an A, B or C cup, they could benefit from more D. Two research studies presented in April at the annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer

Research showed that high levels of **VITAMIN D** reduce the risk of breast cancer by as much as 50 percent. So pack a salmon sandwich and picnic in the grass (oily fish and sunlight are both great sources).

**W** It's safe to shake with a sushi eater. Not just for spicing up California rolls anymore, the antibiotic-containing Japanese plant **WASABI** is being added to natural hand soaps to inhibit bacteria growth and stop the spread of germs.

**X** The X-factor gives women the edge—that is, the extra **X CHROMOSOME** you were born with. Dr. Barbara Migeon, a professor at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, penned an article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that argues that females, who have two powerful X chromosomes (males are dealt just one along with a gene-

deficient Y), have a definite advantage in warding off disease and prolonging life. That's because they have a backup should one X chromosome be mutated or dysfunctional.

**Y** Ommm your way to an even bigger O. **YOGA** eliminates stress, improves flexibility and gets your mind more in tune with your body—all of which can benefit you between the sheets. For up-close and unclothed proof, pick up a copy of *Sexy Yoga: 40 Poses for Mind-Blowing Sex & Greater Intimacy* by Ellen Barrett.

**Z** Ensure sunscreen sticks with you through sweat and swim by choosing a sweat-proof one that contains skin-clinging **ZINC OXIDE** (or titanium dioxide). To avoid the white, chalky Casper the Ghost look, make sure the zinc is "ultramicrosized," so it will go on transparent and still block UV light. ■