

FITNESS FADS LISA SCOTT VIBRATES, ROLLS AND GLIDES HER WAY TO THE BODY BEAUTIFUL TO SPICE UP HER EXERCISE REGIME

Mix it up, work it out

Power-Plate, Yamuna Body Rolling and Gliding – these terms might sound alien to you now, but not for long. They are some of the latest fitness trends getting the exercise world hot and steamy. OK, not quite. But they're far more interesting than the rowing machine.

Power-Plate

What is it? It's a vibrating machine – simple as that. Apparently Madonna and Kylie love it (yawn) but Power-Plate, in its strange little way, could actually change the shape of your body.

How does it work? The machine vibrates 30 to 50 times a second and, in doing so, engages almost 90 per cent of your muscle fibres. A squat, for example, uses just 45 per cent.

I start on 30, the lowest setting, and immediately feel my teeth quivering in my head. My trainer, Amy Giles, who works at the Power-Plate Fitness Studio in Harrods, then instructs me to do a series of different exercises standing on the platform: lunges, calf raises, push-ups, squats and abdominal crunches. And I thought all I had to do was stand on it. (I'm not the first apparently, one client turned up in his suit). Each set lasts for one, very long, minute.

'The machine is fooling your body into thinking it is falling,' says Giles.

'So your muscles are constantly contracting while you exercise, working twice as hard as normal. It's like standing on a rocking boat and engaging muscles to help you balance.'

What are the benefits? It tones and strengthens your muscles, clears cellulite and reduces production



of the stress hormone cortisol by 32 per cent.

At first, I didn't feel like I had indulged in a strenuous workout at all. After all, I had barely broken a sweat. But the next day, my arms and my stomach felt far tighter than they had in weeks.

How much? A session in Harrods' Power-Plate Fitness Studio is £25 for 25min (Tel: 020 7893 8518). Also available at gyms nationwide: www.power-plateuk.com

Yamuna Body Rolling

What is it? Yamuna Body Rolling originated from a technique called Body Logic, a hands-on therapy that works on pulling the muscles away from the bone, creating space in the joints and lengthening the muscle. It's exercise and massage combined. My instructor, Leila Sadeghee, says YBR reminds our muscles that they have to work their full length. Rightio.

How does it work? I sit on a small, hard ball the size of a melon and push my weight into it, almost breathing into it. This pressure pushes the ball into the muscles and joints.

As I wiggle the ball down my hamstrings, I feel a slight click, similar to the pluck of a guitar cord. This is good, apparently.

'You are now being

conscious of your body,' says Sadeghee. 'You're feeling the difference between bone and tendon, tendon and muscle.' Sadeghee also applies extra pressure to the area with her hands and we move the ball down my entire leg. By the time we reach my feet, I'm sweating and my right leg is almost an inch and a half longer than my left one. We do this same exercise on my spine, shoulder and stomach.

What are the benefits? I feel, and look, taller and straighter. My muscles feel awake (although I feel sleepy – a normal reaction) and my joints that once felt 'stuck' are now free. Sadeghee says my correctly aligned body will help me perform better in other exercises and limit injuries.

How much? An hour-long session with Sadeghee costs £90 (Tel: 020 7839 3488). To order a Yamuna Body Rolling kit and try it at home, go to www.yamuna.bodyrolling.com. For YBR workshops, go to www.appleyoga.com.



Roll with it: Instructor Leila Sadeghee demonstrates Yamuna Body Rolling

Gliding

What is it? Masterminded by world aerobic champion Mindy Mylrea, Gliding is a bizarre take on a normal body-conditioning class. I am told to place two purple plastic discs under each foot and follow the instructor.

How does it work? Moving with graceful glides means you engage muscles you never knew you had. I push one leg away on the disc and grip like a mad woman. I fear that if I relax any muscle, I'll fall flat on my face. As I try to pull my leg back in, I wince in pain. There are many different sequences, including the awful floor work (pictured), and you're doing all this to the speed of normal aerobics. Master trainer Greg Sellar says Gliding is an extension of the typical body-conditioning class. 'Before, you got away with being lazy in a class. But, with gliding, you have no choice but to work your body.' Ouch.

What are the benefits? You're sweating, toning, burning calories,

and it's better for your joints. The next day my body was so sore, it hurt to stand up and to sit at my desk. My legs were the worst casualties but after our military-style warm up, it's no surprise.

How much? The class is available at Soho Gyms (www.sohogyms.com) at their Waterloo, Earl's Court and Camden branches. Entrance is £8. Sellar predicts Gliding will soon be in gyms nationwide. To try it at home: www.physicalcompany.co.uk

■ Next week: How to prevent and recover from training injuries.

