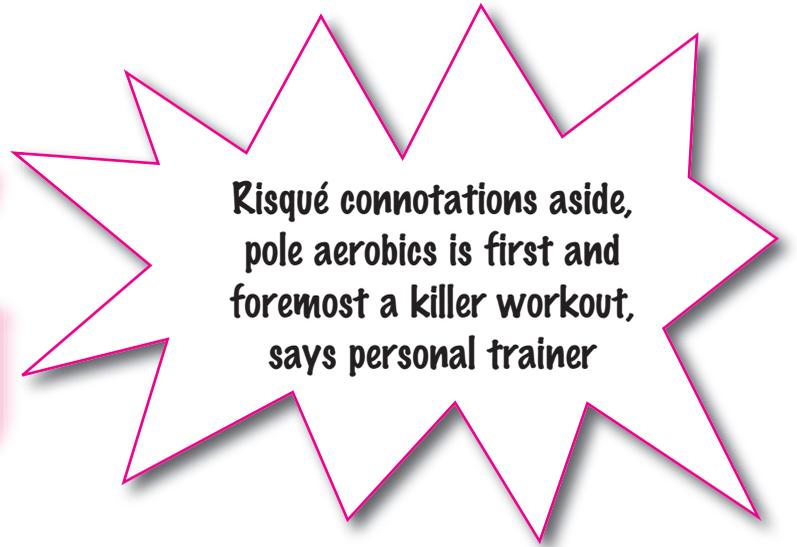


HEALTH & WELLNESS

No sex, please... we're exercising



Risqué connotations aside, pole aerobics is first and foremost a killer workout, says personal trainer

BY JENNIFER HARKER

Fitness can be fun – just ask personal trainer Jane Kiersnowski, known to her students as G.I. Jane. She has recently introduced pole aerobics to her list of group fitness and personal training options – or for a fun girls' night out.

Now, before anyone has visions of provocative clothing and manoeuvres, Kiersnowski sets the record straight.

“Pole dancing is a form of performing art, a combination of dancing and gymnastics,” she said. “(It is) a recognized form of exercise and can be used as both an aerobic and anaerobic workout.

for lengthening and strengthening, as well as using the body itself as resistance for overall toning.

Kiersnowski called it empowering for women and a unique confidence builder.

“It makes you feel like you are floating. Hold on to the pole and you just spin around and you feel like you are flying. It is just such a freedom. It's not dirty or provocative.”

The fun factor is one of the reasons she chose to add pole aerobics to her list of offerings: “We're a young community here, and it's something different, something fun.”

Certified since 1996, Kiersnowski has seen many fitness trends come and go.

“There are new trends all the time. That's what appeals to people, even if they are short-lived. Pole aerobics is not a huge market; it's just something new. It complements the fundamentals of fitness.”

She said when clients come in to her studio and spot the pole, they immediately want to give it a try.

“They walk in and swing on the pole. Everybody wants to have the feeling of it. It's about feeling good in your skin, letting loose and doing something fun.”

Over the years, Kiersnowski said, she has seen a change in people and in fitness, despite an obesity rate stubbornly sticking at around 26 per cent.

“People are coming in with a different attitude,” she said. “There's no reason to be sedentary. Fitness continues to grow with ideas like ‘The Biggest Loser.’ Pole aerobics may be fun and a fad, but it's opening eyes so people say, ‘I can do this.’”

For details, visit www.gi-jane.ca or call 705 527-5264.



JENNIFER HARKER PHOTO

Personal trainer Jane Kiersnowski has added pole aerobics to her list of offerings. Rather than provocative and suggestive, she said it's an awesome workout that puts the fun in fitness.

“Recognized schools and qualifications are being developed as pole dancing increases in popularity, with the overall sex appeal toned down.”

After researching her options, Kiersnowski headed to Toronto to an accredited instructor course.

“There's nothing sexy about it. This is a workout,” she said. “I was so sore after seven hours of training. I have not had an upper-body workout such as this in a very long time.”

Students, of course, won't be doing a seven-hour session, but they will still get a great workout with a full set of exercises including climbs and spins. Along with increasing general strength and fitness, pole aerobics targets the core