

Cardio

Hip Hop

Your Way to Better Health

By Marissa Murphy

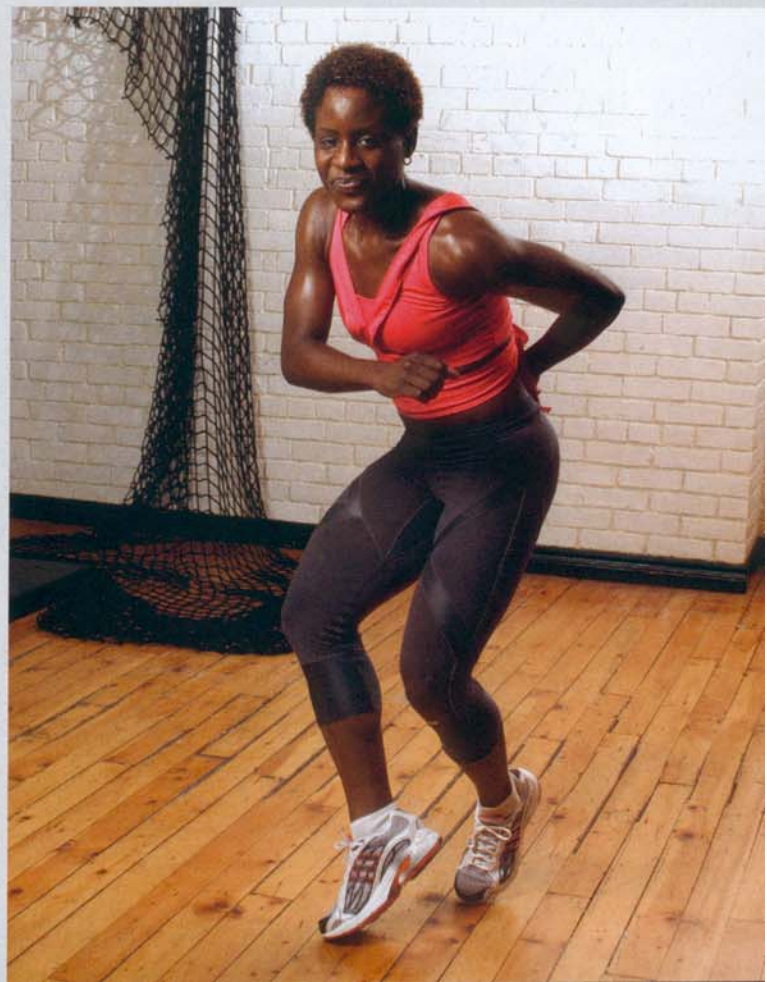
If you're looking for a change in your exercise routine or a new way to experience a great cardio workout, then Cardio Hip Hop is for you.

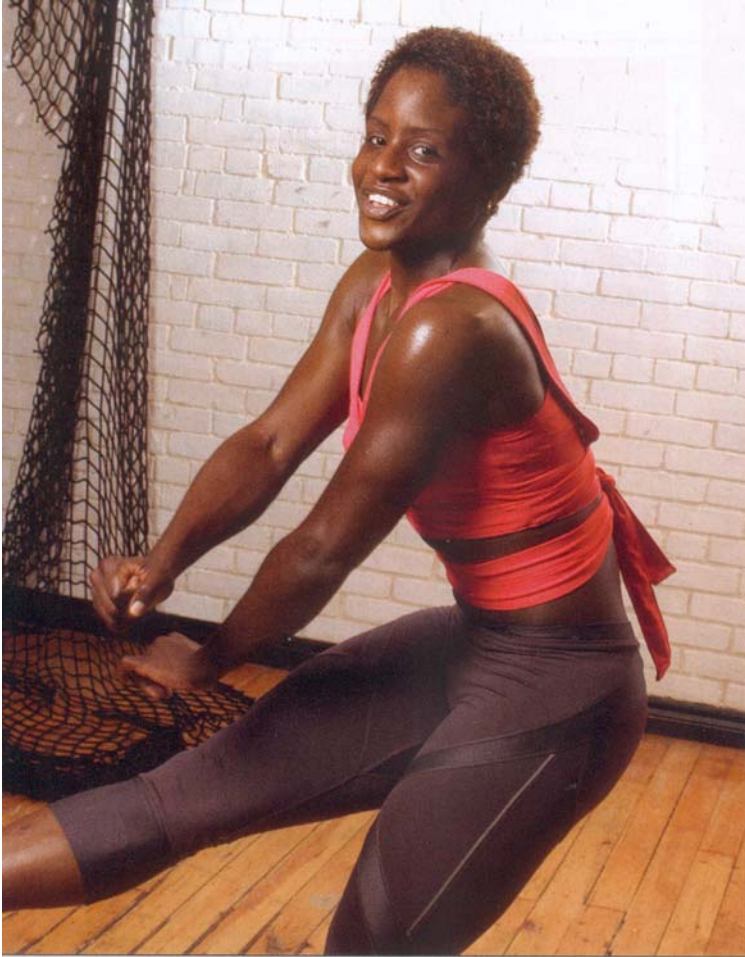
Electrifying dance moves, a great cardio workout, and no dance experience required. Cardio Hip Hop is a new and innovative way to burn calories and have fun at the same time. Taken from the dance studios and placed into many local fitness facilities, it can develop coordination, rhythm, core and lower body strength and improve your level of physical fitness.

Many people are intimidated by the words "Hip Hop" because they automatically think of trained dancers, or coordinated individuals. Unlike many dance studios where Hip Hop classes may be geared towards skilled dancers, regardless of age or sex, Cardio Hip Hop in a fitness facility is usually designed for individuals with little or no dance experience. In conjunction with Yoga and Pilates, Hip Hop dance was added to local fitness clubs to provide members with additional ways to meet their fitness goals and add variety to their fitness regime.

The essence of Hip Hop culture is its dynamic music, fashion and dance. Hip Hop dance originated in the early 70's among NYC's Americans and Latinos. Hip Hop dances such as breakdancing, popping and locking were stylized movements that reflected the dynamic beats of Hip Hop music during the 70's and 80's. This dance continues to be a movement that is powerful and energetic in nature, using a fusion of many dance traditions such as African, Latin and Jazz dance.

"Cardio Hip Hop" is a class that combines the basic movements of Hip Hop dance with aerobic exercise. These movements are simple and repetitive, allowing people to burn calories and enjoy themselves while doing so. Similar to Hi/Lo or Step aerobics classes, the more classes you attend, the easier it becomes.





Whether your goal is to lose those extra five pounds, or develop a sense of rhythm, Cardio Hip Hop can develop skills that are needed for everyday life. The exaggerated side steps, jumps and floor work strengthens the lower body. These movements assist in your balance, give you strength for bending and lifting, and increase your stamina for everyday activities and exercises. Body rolls, also referred to as “the snake”, and the twisting of the torso tightens and defines the core. Whether it is a beginner, intermediate or advanced class, arm and leg movements are combined to add intensity, thus increasing the calories burned.

Learning to perform movements to specific counts and to the beat of the music develops your sense of rhythm and coordination. Before you know it, you have improved your fitness level and dance skills. Watch out J-Lo!

As you master the movements of Cardio Hip Hop, you will automatically begin to incorporate your own individual style and personality. The boundaries of this exercise are endless. So snap those fingers, flick that head, move those hips, and most importantly have fun. And the next time you're at the gym, try a Cardio Hip Hop class and Hip Hop your way to better health!

Marissa Murphy is a certified group fitness instructor and has extensive training in various types of dance such as jazz, Hip Hop, and ballet. Marissa has performed for such groups as the Shania Twin Band, Hamilton Ti-Cats Cheer and Dance Squad and the Canadian Hip Hop group Brass Munk. She was also the head choreographer for McMaster University's athletic dance squad, Mac Troupers.