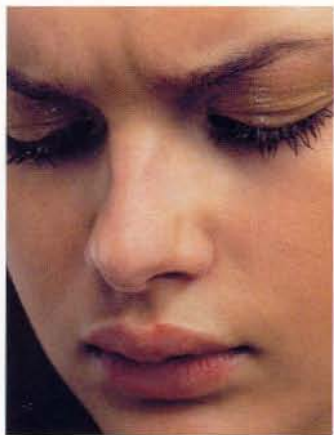




Enlightened lift: Ballet and martial arts meet in Equinox's Brazilian Tummy Tuck and Butt Lift workouts.

FIRM PROMISE

We have Brazil to thank for elevating our standards for bikini waxes, plastic surgery, and supermodels. And now, inspired by the impeccable bodies on Rio's beaches, Equinox gyms are launching the Brazilian Tummy Tuck and Butt Lift programs, two 30-minute high-intensity classes that aim to give surgery-like results without the scalpel. Derived from capoeira (the Brazilian martial art), moves such as *ginga* (side-to-side bent-knee stepping) and *esquiva* (a squat with the torso twisted) intensely target the abs and lower glutes. (When strengthened, the lower glutes push up the rest of the rear end.) After a month of twice-weekly attendance at both, participants usually see more muscle definition in their midsection and a higher, rounder behind, according to the routines' creator, Equinox's Leandro Carvalho, a former professional ballet dancer from Brazil.



VEGETABLE MATTER

Vegetarians who pump iron may want to snatch a bottle of creatine—an amino acid essential to the muscle growth that is provided by meat and fish. Researchers at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, led by Darren Burke, PhD, gave subjects roughly .04 grams of creatine powder per pound of body weight (around one teaspoon for a 130-pound woman) daily during an eight-week resistance-training program.

Creatine-supplemented vegetarians saw a greater increase in bench-press strength, whole-body lean tissue, and total performance than both nonvegetarians who took the powder and vegetarians given a placebo. "There are several studies on long-term use of five grams of creatine daily," says Joseph Clark, PhD, a professor of neurology at the University of Cincinnati who has done extensive research on the subject. "That's considered a safe dose, whereas people who take 40 grams of creatine a day are putting a tremendous burden on their bodies

Sure shot: Proceeds from the Wilson Hope golf ball go to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

and abusing the supplement." Creatine has a 30-day life span in the body, so Burke suggests a monthly supplementation schedule to maintain levels of the amino acid. "Take creatine daily for one week, then take a three- to four-week break."



GREENS PEACE

Yoga fans may be achieving more than inner calm—they also could be improving their golf game. In a study published in *The American Journal of Sports Medicine*, golfers who performed yoga stretches that improve hip flexibility experienced less lower-back pain. And fast-moving sequences (such as those in vinyasa yoga) may bring you closer to a hole-in-one. According to a study published in *The Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, subjects who combined weight training and plyometrics (any activity in which muscles stretch before they contract, such as power push-ups) for eight weeks improved the speed and distance of their drive.

PLEASURE PRINCIPLE

Exercisers looking to measure the intensity of their cardio workouts have relied on high-tech heart-rate monitors or the super-low-tech "speak test" (if you can't carry on a conversation, you're working too hard). But a recent study from Iowa State University offers an even easier way to know if you've gone from a state of aerobic (with oxygen) metabolism to an anaerobic one: "If it doesn't feel good, slow down. Feelings of displeasure accurately mark a switch to anaerobic metabolism," says human-performance professor **Panteleimon Ekkekakis**, PhD, who notes that excessive anaerobic activity may increase injury risk. Previous research has found that people burn the most fat when they work just below the anaerobic threshold, so it makes sense to target this zone if you're trying to lose weight. "To improve your body, you have to challenge it," Ekkekakis says. "But if you start feeling bad, scale back your intensity a bit."