

## Hotel Reps: Stay In, Work Out, Tone Up

Sunday, March 11, 2007; P02

Dropping a few pounds is hard enough, but it can be even tougher on the road, especially if you're not a gym rat and are a little intimidated by the hotel fitness center. You may be more likely to stick with a routine if you work out in the privacy of your hotel room.

-- *Elissa Leibowitz Poma*

### Hotel Offerings

If you don't have time for a fitness center workout or would prefer not to socialize with your sweaty boss on the StairMaster, you can borrow a fitness kit or watch a free video on the TV entertainment system at participating properties of various hotel chains.

- *Marriott* and *Renaissance* properties have three fitness kits. One includes an oval-shape, weighted device that you "pedal" with your hands. Another is a foam exercise wedge that has 21 suggested workouts printed on its washable nylon cover. The third kit uses resistance tubes to focus on building strength and boosting energy. The kits' accompanying videos are free, and other videos, including Pilates and yoga, are available for about \$6.95. (Prices vary by property.)

- You can keep up your spinning routine in private at a number of *Westin* hotels in the United States and Canada by using a stationary bicycle available in some rooms. These Westin properties have either in-room bikes or treadmills, plus other equipment, videos, workout magazines and books.

- You won't find chocolates on your pillow at select *Hyatt* properties (including the Grand Hyatt hotels in Atlanta and New York). Instead, you'll discover a card showing an 11-minute wind-down yoga sequence. Yoga-focused videos are available for \$6.99.

- *Omni Hotels'* Get Fit Kits include barbells, a stretch band, a mat and a small radio with ear buds. At some Omni properties, you can have a treadmill delivered to your room for free.

- The Stay Fit Kit at *Hilton Garden Inns* includes an eight-pound ball used to strengthen your abdomen. The kit also has a Pilates band, a yoga mat with bricks and hand weights.

### Fitness Products

Various items can keep you enthused for a hotel-room workout and are easy to pack. Here are some of the newer fitness products that travel light.

- Download a workout from *iAmplify.com* (212-201-1544, <http://www.iamplify.com/>) to play on an iPod or other MP3 player. The 22-minute video "Juris Kupris' Hotel Room Workout" (\$9.95) is ideal for beginners, and the audio-only, 30-minute "Hotel Room Workout" (\$4.95) is good for intermediates.

· Fitness instructor Leah Garcia understands that business travel is probably not the time for intense workouts. Her "*Hotel Room Workout DVD*" (919-469-0527, <http://www.healthytravelnetwork.com/>; \$24.95) is a two-disc compilation of various cardio, Pilates and core-conditioning routines, among others, that you can play on a DVD-capable laptop.

· "*The Fit Traveler*" (Publishers Design Group, \$17.95) by Kari Eide and Lissa Mueller is a compact book outlining a 30-minute workout. Another version is "*The Fit Traveler: Senior Edition*," for the 50-plus crowd.

· The *FitDeck* (858-453-6644, <http://www.fitdeck.com/>; \$18.95) is a pack of cards with different exercises printed on each one. The exercises are rather basic, but they help mix up your routine, especially if you randomly pluck a card from the deck and do that exercise.

### Expert Tips

One of the biggest problems when you travel on business is the amount of sitting you do -- on the airplane, in meetings all day, at business dinners. We asked fitness experts for tips:

· Write up *10-minute and 20-minute workout routines* on a card and tuck it in your suitcase, says Karen Hiser, owner and chief "fitness" officer of the Healthy Travel Network, which focuses on fitness for business travelers. "Your trips are likely stressful enough already; don't further frustrate yourself by failing to squeeze in a 45-minute or hour-long workout," Hiser said in an e-mail.

· The best time to work out is in the *morning and immediately after your meetings end*, says Kathy Smith, a nationally known fitness guru. "It gives you an energy boost."

· *Stretching is more important* than any other activity, advises Bill Tulin, an executive with Ernst and Young who travels frequently. Tulin recommends squats, incline push-ups using the side of the bed and crunches. (Lying on your back on the bed, touch your right elbow to your left knee, and vice versa.)

· You can do a *short cardio workout* without bothering guests in the room below. Smith recommends standing with your feet shoulder-width apart and bringing your left knee up and right elbow down to meet in the middle, and vice versa.

· Incorporate *hotel furniture* into your workout. Tulin says to do exercises on your bed if the floor is too hard on your back. Use the wall to do push-ups and a sturdy chair to help you balance.

· During your meetings, Smith says, practice "*isometric contractions*." Sit with good posture and contract first your calves, then your thighs, then your buttocks.