

fitness flash

APRIL SHOWERS It's hard to get motivated to exercise outside when it's pouring, but your session should feel even easier than on a sunny day. That's because **rain lowers your body temperature slightly below normal, so you may go longer** and harder than usual, according to research from Stanford University in California. Ready, set...get wet!

ROOM SERVICE Order up ► a workout on your next vacation: Westin Hotels (Westin.com) provides in-room yoga routines; Hilton (Hilton.com) allows guests to call up a treadmill and weights; and now Marriott (Marriott.com) will load exercise videos on your TV and even supply the gear you'll need to follow along. **Getting your fitness fix is as easy as summoning a late-night BLT!**



SNOOZE CLUES Do yoga, sleep better, reports a study at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. **Insomniacs fell asleep faster when they practiced for 45 minutes a day.** "A minimum of three weekly sessions would probably improve sleep quality for noninsomniacs," says study author Sat Bir Khalsa, Ph.D. Bonus: Yoga tones muscles, so you won't just *dream* about a better body.

STRESS AND YOUR WEIGHT **The leaner you are, the faster your blood pressure returns to normal following stress,** a study from the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta reports. Researchers speculate that your body releases sodium to bring down spiked blood pressure, but that body fat slows this process. Turn to the SELF Challenge on page 99 to shed fat and keep your heart healthy.

HAPPY TRAILS Salute Earth Day (April 22) with a volunteer park-tending program. Get a serious workout clearing trails of rocks and brush while you help spruce up Mother Nature. Find a path to pamper at Outdoors.org.

INJURY INFO **Before you serve a tennis ball or swing a club, stretch your shoulders.** Four million Americans suffer shoulder injuries each year, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons in Rosemont, Illinois. "Begin by warming up with multiple forward and backward arm circles," says Michael A. Schwartz, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon in Greenwich, Connecticut.

ON-THE-GO WORKOUT Now you can take your pilates routine to the gym, bring it home, take it on the road—carried in your pocket. **Celebrity instructor Mari Winsor of Los Angeles has released downloadable mat sessions for MP3 players** (\$20 per month for four routines, available at iAmplify.com). Save them on a new iPod Shuffle, and you've got the most portable personal trainer around.