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- TV Reviews
- Video/DVD Reviews
- Web/Game Reviews
- Whipple's World
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- In The Papers
- One on 1
- NYer of the Week
- This Day in History

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- Scholar/Athlete

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Cardio Tennis Workout Designed To Get Your Heart Racing

DIAL UP BROAD BAND

September 05, 2005

As the U.S. Open continues in Queens this week, Venus, Serena, and Lindsay don't have to be some of the only ones getting all the action - the tennis world is serving up and promoting a new way for everyone to play the game. NY1's Kafi Drexel filed this report.

According to the Tennis Industry Association, while millions are watching the pros, very few will actually pick up racquets to play the game themselves. So the TIA, along with the United States Tennis Association, is offering up cardio tennis as a way to change that.

"Cardio tennis will do two things. One, there's a lot of tennis players that go for their cardio activity and go to a fitness club for that. Well, why not stay in the tennis club and get your cardio workout?" says TIA President Jim Baugh. "The second audience is all those people going for their fitness activities that haven't considered tennis as their fitness activity, now they can with cardio tennis."

Cardio tennis is a group activity series of drills set to fast-paced music, where the feet are always in motion. The warm-up, workout and cool down usually goes for about an hour.

The goal isn't to make you the best player in the world, but to get your heart rate pumping within your aerobic

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training zone throughout the session. Players wear heart rate monitors to keep track.

Some doctors say the cardiovascular benefits are endless.

“It helps get the person's fitness level up. As fitness levels go up, the risk of heart disease goes down,” says Dr. Gordon Blackburn, the Director of Cardiac Rehab at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. “It burns calories up, [and] as calories are burned weight is better managed. As the weight goes down and gets into an ideal level then we know that the risks of heart disease, diabetes, cancer all are reduced.”

Some New Yorkers trying the program for the first time say it's something they'd like to keep doing. They say they're hoping it will also help motivate others to play the game.

“Your usual tennis routine, you're just hitting balls back and forth. You're playing games, so there's a lot of stopping for serves or errors, and this cardio has just kept us running for hours,” says tennis player Lucy DiCostanzo.

“I think something like this will definitely encourage momentum for someone to get back out on the courts who has given up tennis for a certain period of time and wants to get back in the sport,” says fellow player Amos Nevin, “or someone who wants to play tennis and get a great workout and surround themselves with other active people.”

There are currently about 10 locations for cardio tennis in New York City, including at the USTA National Tennis Center in Flushing, Queens.

For more information visit www.cardiotennis.com.

- *Kafi Drexel*

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Kafi Drexel

Kafi Drexel covers Health & Fitness for NY1 News.



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