

Salsa dancers less likely to get injured than Zumba dancers

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Salsa dancers are less likely to get injured while dancing than people taking part in Spanish, aerobic or Zumba dancing, according to new research.

But they suffer a similar rate of injuries as ballroom dancers, the researchers at Coventry University found.

The injuries they did receive were most often caused by being stepped on by another [dancer](#).

The research also suggested that women were twice as likely to be injured while [salsa](#) dancing than men.

It's the first study to look at the injury rates of amateur salsa dancers, and compare its finding to similar research into other popular genres of dance.

The research team found that people were more likely to be injured while salsa dancing if they were women, older, and had a higher body mass index (BMI).

Those with more salsa dance experience, according to the research, were less likely to be injured while salsa dancing.

The study involved 450 amateur salsa dancers aged between 18 and 64 filling in a survey.

It included questions about their salsa experience, how many salsa sessions they took part in a week, other physical activity they engaged in, their warm-up routine, as well asking for details about their injury history.

None of the dancers were professional, but all had more than a year of salsa dancing experience.

Other findings included:

- The injury risk increased by 3 percent for every one year increase in age.
- There was a 7 percent increase in injury risk for every 1 kg/m² increase in BMI.
- The odds of injury reduced by 7 percent for every year of salsa dance experience gained.

Salsa was found to have an injury rate of 1.1 injuries for women and 0.5 injuries for men per 1,000 hours of dancing.

Ballroom had a similar injury rate of 1.5 injuries for women and 0.5 injuries for men per 1,000 hours of dancing.

The salsa injury rate was lower than similar genres of dance, including Spanish (which had an injury rate of 1.5 injuries per 1,000 hours); aerobic (which had an injury rate of 2.9 injuries per 1,000 hours) and Zumba (which had an injury rate of 3.9 injuries per 1,000 hours).

The research has been published in the *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*.

Dr. Pablo A Domene, a research associate at the university's Centre for Sport, Exercise and Life Sciences, who also teaches salsa dancing to staff and students, said:

"Researchers have been investigating injuries in dance for many years to try to reduce the risk of people being hurt while performing – but until now no one has ever looked at salsa."

"For us it seemed necessary to do this research using a large group of dancers, and from a variety of countries, to be able to provide comparisons in terms of injury rates, types and severity with other popular genres of dance."

"It was interesting to see that salsa is about equal to ballroom, not more so, in terms of likelihood of getting injured if you participate in these dances."

He also had some advice for salsa dancers to help them avoid [injury](#).

"Avoiding dancing when the environment is clearly overcrowded, taking extra care not to collide with or step on other dancers, and avoiding wearing open-toed shoes are some practical recommendations for amateur salsa dancers that may reduce the chances of getting hurt."

Earlier this year, a team of researchers including Dr. Domene carried out a study that suggested salsa [dancing](#) can boost brain function.

More information: Pablo A. Domene et al. Injury Surveillance of Nonprofessional Salsa Dance, *Journal of Physical Activity and Health* (2018). [DOI: 10.1123/jpah.2017-0498](https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.2017-0498)

Provided by Coventry University

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