

USA
WEEKEND

AUGUST 17-19, 2007
usaweekend.com

ThinkSmart

To ask any USA WEEKEND columnist a question, visit usaweekend.com.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE

FitSmart By JORGE CRUISE
Kick-start your heart



MARTIAL ARTS OFFER much more than simply combat skills. They can be great for getting fit.

Take kung fu. "Kung fu training can offer a great cardiovascular workout, increase flexibility and improve basic strength," says Don Niam, the owner of Don Niam Studio Martial Arts Center in Akron, Ohio. "It's also excellent for your mental strength and wellness."

With traditional martial arts classes, you will benefit from learning the core elements of respect, form and balance. But if you want to skip straight to a heart-pumping pace, find a fitness-based kickboxing or boxing gym. Niam, who produces

martial arts fitness videos, suggests looking for one with classes for beginners because, he says, "a solid foundation is important with any type of martial arts."

And, of course, if you do want to take up martial arts for the functional purpose of self-defense, there are plenty of options out there. "I suggest joining a school that has real-life situation training and kickboxing training," Niam says. "Developing striking power is essential to be able to execute self-defense tactics."

He also recommends classes that offer awareness training on how to keep yourself out of dangerous situations.

Contact FitSmart editor Jorge Cruise, author of the forthcoming *The 12-Second Sequence* at 12second.com.

KUNG FU CAN PROVIDE A TOTAL BODY WORKOUT.

MoneySmart SHARON
3 easy ways to raise your credit score

1. Ask the primary card issuer to add you as a joint cardholder. Be diligent about making (at least the minimum) payments on time. Being a joint cardholder is not just an authorized user that you share full responsibility for all debt on the account.

2. Get a major credit card in your name, especially if you are not a primary cardholder.

3. Apply for a retail or store credit card that may be OK'd quickly. Credit cards, a secured credit card or sub-prime credit card all fall into this category but aren't the best options, says John Ulzheimer, a consumer advocacy group CEO.

EatSmart JEAN CARPER

Broccoli vs. bladder cancer

Chalk up another one for broccoli. Eating lots of cruciferous vegetables — that includes broccoli, cauliflower, kale, turnips, collards, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, radishes and watercress — reduces the odds of developing bladder cancer.

The reason: These vegetables contain high amounts of isothiocyanates, which are anti-cancer compounds. In a 1,400-person study by M.D.

Anderson Cancer Center, people who ate the greatest amounts of isothiocyanates in cruciferous vegetables were 29% less likely to be diagnosed with bladder cancer, especially in men, smokers and people who are at least age 64.



TravelSmart EVERETT POTTER

What not to put in checked bags

If you're one of the many travelers who find it necessary to check luggage these days, you should know that there are plenty of things you should not be packing in your checked bags. The airlines have a detailed list of items they will assume no liability for in the event that these goods are lost, damaged or stolen.

Topping the list is electronic equipment, ranging from computers and cameras to MP3 players and cellphones.

Nor should you pack jewelry, cash or valuable documents in your checked bags.

And if you need to transport artwork, antiques or your grandmother's silver, you should put it in your carry-on baggage or ship it separately. Prescription meds and eyeglasses always should be carried on board.

If you wear real fur, you'll want to leave that at home, too.



You can pack fresh or frozen foods, including fruits, veggies, meats and bakery products, but the airlines take no responsibility if those items are damaged or lost.