

Bodywize

To be able to dance to the best of your ability, you need to treat your body well. Your body (and your brain) needs nourishing regularly. Don't skip meals – just eat sensibly and keep your body well hydrated too with plenty of water.

During training sessions and competitions it is essential that you remember to keep your body thoroughly hydrated. Your body will be sweating and therefore losing water. Dehydration affects performance and if you feel thirsty, then that is an indication that you are already on the way to being dehydrated.

We firstly recommend water as being the best thing to drink. It will improve your energy levels simply by rehydrating you and therefore you will perform better. If you don't like plain water (and you are not alone) then try an alternative such as adding a sugar free orange or blackcurrant squash, or trying one of the many isotonic drinks available in the supermarkets. They contain sodium which helps to replace what you lose through sweating and they also have a small amount of carbohydrate for an energy boost.

Please avoid carbonated (fizzy) drinks at all costs. Mixed around in your tummy during dance could make you feel or even be sick which is not the best way to get the judges to notice you. It is reported that drinks such as red bull (although giving you an energy boost) actually dehydrate you in the long run. As well as being fizzy, they also only offer a short burst of energy which really is not what you are looking for. When the short burst of energy subsides, you will be left feel tired, sluggish and most definitely not on top form. Fresh juices and smoothies can also cause problems, making you feel bloated, tired and the acidity levels can affect overall performance.

It is important to consider what types of food you will be eating during a competition. Although it's fun to stuff 3 bags of crisps, countless sweets and a selection of biscuits and chocolates, it's also not a good idea. Avoid foods that contain a lot of fat. We all love jam doughnuts and burgers but they will leave you feeling heavy, bloated and unable to dance to the best of your ability.

Go for a sandwich or some pasta but mix it with some fresh salad or vegetables. Yoghurt, nuts and a little fruit (especially bananas) are all good. Chicken and turkey are excellent meat choices.

Get plenty of sleep and try to manage your time well so that you don't panic about completing homework. Allow some time for your hobbies so that it is not all work and no play. Dance is an excellent form of exercise and it can lift your mood and make you feel happy. Classes give you the chance to socialise with your friends (on occasions too much!) Sometimes, even if you are unwell, coming along to watch can help cheer you up.

We want you to be fit and healthy, but don't bend over backwards to be just like your friends. Everyone is different, everyone has a different shape.

Also, everyone has a different dance style. Judges are individuals who have their own opinions. Some judges prefer a powerful dancer, some like flexible or elegant dancers. Find your own style and go with it. We are here to train your bodies to be strong, flexible and supple, to help you create choreography that suits your style and work on your performance skills that will enable you to perform/compete as a polished, personable dancer.

We want to build your confidence so that later in life (even if you do not continue dance as a career) you will have gained valuable life skills such as standing in front of a crowd of people (competitions, performances etc.), putting a project together from start to finish (choreographing a routine) and working as part of a team (pairs, trios and team work).

We have been working on Impact dancers becoming team players. We know it is important for dancers to support each other both at internal and external events. That level of support will help you and your friends with their confidence and overall performance. Don't put pressure on others either. They may be weaker than you at some things but better in other ways. Be a friend and compliment others. Smile and be happy!