

Improving posture in Pilates

The body must be re-educated to cope with the stresses of daily life. In case where postural fault is severe, or there is pain, you should see a specialist before attempting pilates, yoga or any other exercise programme. Pilates is not meant to be alternative to the prescription of a medical professional, but it can be a useful tool to accompany the recommendations of a specialist.

Commonly when people trained in a gym they tend to choose exercise randomly ,concentrating on the areas of the body they like the least, or doing exercises that they find easy to do: this can reinforce existing misalignments. Unless the body is trained as a whole, as in Pilates, its weakness will only be reinforced. The regular practice of Pilates strengthens and stretches all the core postural muscles, making correct posture far less of an effort and more of an unconscious act.

To understand the whole picture it is essential to realize the importance of the TORSO. Every step you take, every weight you lift and every movement you make must be stabilized by the muscles of abdominals and the back to protect the spinal cord against injuries. It does not matter how strong your arms are , unless your torso can protect you by stabilizing internally, your strength will be limited.

So take up your stance in front of the mirror. Only this time adopt what you consider to be "good posture". You should note the following points. Can you see them in your reflection?

- Shoulders are level

- Hip bones are equal and symmetrical
- The thumb side of the hand faces forward.
- The knee joints are symmetrical and face forward.
- The ankle joints are symmetrical
- The weight of the body is equally distributed between all four " corners" of the feet
- you are lengthening through your spine.

Pilates works by strenghtening the key postural muscles, making it physically more comfortable to maintain the correct alignment.

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