



**Wirral University  
Teaching Hospital**  
NHS Foundation Trust

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# Physiotherapy Pilates

## Patient Information Leaflet

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## **Things to know before you start your Pilates classes:**

### **What is Pilates?**

Pilates is a mind-body centring technique, beginning movement from a central core of stability (Glenn Withers APPI Pilates institute). In other words it involves moving your arms and legs whilst maintaining a neutral spine position aiming to achieve optimal control – not too stiff and not weak.

### **Who can do Pilates?**

Anyone can do Pilates. Some exercises may be modified to suit you and we do not recommend attending during the first three months of pregnancy.

It can be suitable for all ages and can be helpful in the management of pain, or for those rehabilitating from an injury or surgery, or just to be able to perform normal activities during the day more easily.

## **Why should I try Pilates?**

Theories of thought have moved away from a 'weak back' or a 'poor core' causing low back pain. Most exercise is beneficial in the management of spinal pain in comparison to doing nothing. However research identifies that after an episode of back pain:

- Core muscles can become weak with an increased activity level of the superficial trunk muscles.
- Recurrence rates for first episode low back pain without exercise is 84%, with exercise the likelihood of pain returning reduces to 30%.
- Keep it Going! 30-60minutes twice a week for 3-6 months gets maximal results. You may feel much better after our taster sessions but you will need to keep going independently to gain the full benefit.
- The class will be held in the physiotherapy gym at Clatterbridge Hospital and is 45 minutes long. You will be offered four classes on four consecutive weeks.
- This beginner's class will focus on an introduction to Pilates for different parts of your body, although the main focus will be on the spine.
- It is held on a Tuesday at 14:30 or on a Wednesday at 12:30 and is led by a physiotherapist.

- Please arrive in comfortable clothes such as leggings, tracksuit or shorts and bring a drink with you. We will provide a mat and a pillow.
- You will be expected to lie down and get on and off the floor, although you can use a plinth if you struggle with this.
- Please let the physiotherapist leading the class know if you are feeling unwell or particularly painful before the start of the class.
- You may feel slightly achy or uncomfortable after the class- This is normal and just means you have been working hard. However if you struggle with a lot of pain after the class, please let the physiotherapist leading the class know during the next session.
- We will aim to discharge you with some supporting information after you have completed your course of Pilates classes.
- If you have any further questions prior to starting the Pilates classes, please do not hesitate to contact the physiotherapy department.
- We look forward to seeing you in the class.