



**Wirral University
Teaching Hospital**
NHS Foundation Trust

Physiotherapy Pilates

Patient Information Leaflet

Congratulations on completing your Pilates exercise programme in Physiotherapy. Please find below some information which you may find helpful as you continue your Pilates journey:

If you want to continue attending Pilates classes- great! We would recommend that you attend a physiotherapy-led Pilates class where possible, although you don't have to do this to feel the benefits.

You may find the following links helpful:

<https://trustme-ed.com/blog/exercising-when-it-hurts>
[APPI Beginner Matwork Class with Jacqui - YouTube](#)
[Pilates video for beginners - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Remember to consider your Pilates 5 key principles whilst performing the exercises below:

- 1) Place your hands just on the inside of the bones at the front of your pelvis. Imagine you are contracting the muscles which you would use to stop yourself passing urine to activate your deep stomach muscles. Now relax this contraction just so that you have a slight awareness around this area.
- 2) Consider your pelvic 'soup bowl.' Tilt your pelvis forwards and backwards (as if you are spilling out soup). Now come to rest in a neutral position so that your pelvis is level and 'no soup is being spilt.'
- 3) Rib cage and spine is in a neutral position. Consider trying to glide your ribs straight across to the left and right and then find the neutral position in between these positions.
- 4) Shrug your shoulders up and down. Imagine your shoulder blades moving like two dinner plates on the back of your ribs. Now come to rest with your shoulder blades away from your ears.
- 5) Imagine you are being pulled up to the ceiling using a piece of string, so that the back of your neck is long.

You may like to consider the above positions as you go about your day-to-day activity ie. putting the washing in and out of the dryer and driving.

Exercises from the class for you to continue:

Bridge- Begin with your knees bent in lying, feet flat on the floor. Remove the support/ pillow from under your head.

Breathe in.

level One: Now breathe out and lift your pelvis up as high as is comfortable. Lower down slowly.

Level Two: Try to roll up one vertebra at a time so that your pelvis lifts from the floor before your back.

Now try to roll back down in the opposite manner. Consider placing one vertebra down onto the mat at a time.



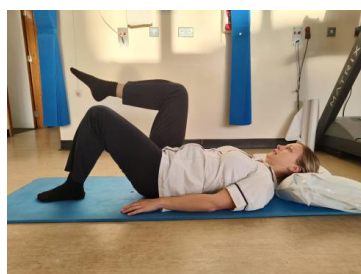
Scissors- Begin in lying with your knees bent and your feet flat on the mat. Breathe in.

Breathe out and lift your right knee and hip to 90 degrees (to a tabletop position). Maintain the neutral position of your pelvis.

Now lower your knee down so that your foot is parallel with the other foot on the floor.

Now repeat on the left side.

Continue alternating between legs one at a time.



Bent knee fall out- Begin in lying with your knees bent and your feet flat on the mat. Breathe in.

Breathe out and lower one knee to the side keeping your pelvis still. You should only move as far as you can control, so this should be a small movement.

The other knee should stay completely still.

Now repeat on the other side and continue to alternate between legs.



One Leg Stretch-

Breathe in.

Breathe out and lengthen your leg away from your body using the support of the mat.

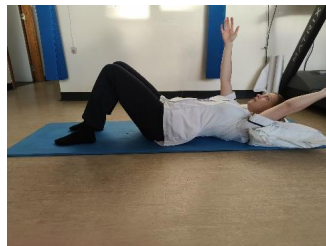
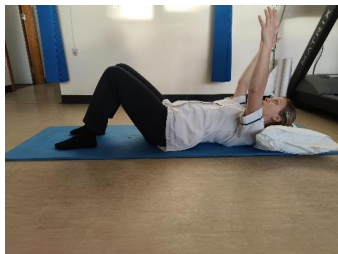
Now bring your leg back to a bent position.

Your opposite leg should stay completely still. Try to keep your trunk and pelvis as still as possible, so that only your leg moves.

Alternate between legs.



Overhead reach- Begin with your hands pointing up towards the ceiling, palms facing each other. Slowly reach one hand towards the wall behind you, so that your arm lowers towards the mat. Now bring your hand back to the start position slowly on an exhale. Repeat on the opposite side. Try to keep your trunk and pelvis as still as possible throughout the movement.



Breaststroke Prep- Lying on your stomach with your hands alongside your body and your arms straight. Ensure your pelvis is in a neutral position. Relax your shoulders and head to begin.

Level One:

Engage your shoulder blades so that your arms lift slightly away from the floor, palms facing towards each other.

Level Two:

Lift your head from the mat. Keep looking down towards the mat so that your neck remains long.

Lower your head.

Lower your shoulders.

Repeat.

You do not need to lift very far from the mat initially and can lift higher as you practice the exercise.



Clam- Lie on your side with your knees bent.

Take a minute to set yourself up in the right position:

Bend your knees and lift your feet to check that your feet are in line with your bottom.

You can place your arm alongside your body straight or put your hand underneath your head with your elbow bent. Whichever is most comfortable for you.

Breathe in.

Breathe out and lift your top knee a small amount. Your feet should stay together.

Do not allow your pelvis to rock backwards during the movement.

Now lower your knee back down on an outbreath. Repeat for approximately a minute on one side. Now swap to the other side.



Side Kick

Bend the lower leg and straighten the top leg, parallel with the floor.

Glide the top leg along an imaginary table top, keeping the pelvis still.

Glide the leg back to the start position.



Side Openings- Lie on your side with your knees bent comfortably and your arms stretched out in front of you and head supported on the pillow underneath your head.

Level One:

Slide your top hand along the opposite arm towards your head.

Rotate from the mid-body so that your heart is facing the ceiling and your hand faces the wall behind you.

Follow the movement of your hand with your head.

Now bring the hand up towards the ceiling and all the way back around to meet your other hand.

Level Two:

You can 'overshoot' the bottom hand with the top hand for a slightly deeper stretch.

Now roll onto the other side and repeat with the opposite arm.



Some discomfort is normal with these exercises but try to avoid pushing into pain. If you have persistent increased pain, please stop all exercises and contact your GP or physiotherapist.

Clatterbridge General Hospital Physiotherapy Department 0151 4827776

Arrowe Park Hospital Physiotherapy Department 0151 6047045

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille and on tape.
Please contact 0151 604 7289 if calling from outside the
Hospital and x2761 if calling from inside the Hospital.



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Date of Publication: March 2025
Date for Review: March 2028

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