

*“Pilates: The PhysioWorks difference”*

**Y**ou have probably heard of the exercise system known as Pilates (Pi-LAH-tees). This program, first developed in the 1920s by Joseph Pilates, aims to restore strength and balance to your body by focusing upon your core – your deep tummy, back and buttock muscles. Strong core muscles give you a solid foundation upon which your body can work more efficiently – a sensible principle that is used not only in health, but also in engineering. Perhaps some medieval builders in Italy could have heeded this advice!



**Can Pilates exercises be improved?**

Although Joseph Pilates was on the right track in the 1920s, modern physiotherapy exercise science has extended the concept of ‘core strength’. Many studies have shown that some up-to-the-minute additions to his program make it far more effective.

In particular, the *timing and strength of your deep muscle contractions* makes a massive difference in your body’s ability to stabilise itself. The research shows that even though your deep muscles may be

strong, your core stability will suffer if they are contracting with an inefficient or badly timed pattern. This lack of stability results in more pain and stiffness, increased chance of injury, and decreased sporting performance.

If you are performing Pilates-style gym programs without using the correct muscle activation, you are not getting the most out of your efforts. In fact, you might even be doing yourself more harm than good, for you will simply be reinforcing inefficient patterns.

Like a tennis player who continually practices a poor technique, you won’t improve very much. However, like a player whose coach has corrected their faulty swing, your results will be far better if your technique is correct.

**The PhysioWorks difference.**

So what is the PhysioWorks difference? At Mansfield and Bulimba PhysioWorks, we conduct an individual training session *before* you attend your group class. In this session, we assess your core muscle activation, and show you how to use your muscles efficiently. In this way, you will be strengthening the *correct* muscle patterns, not practicing the wrong ones. (continued over....)



## “Pilates: The PhysioWorks difference (continued)”

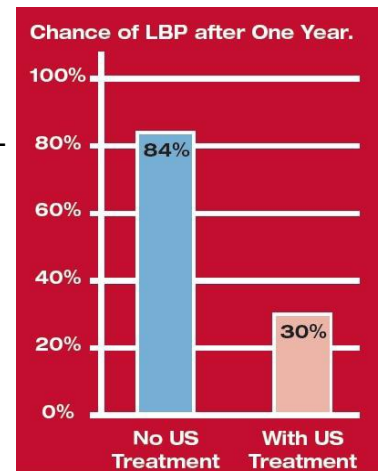
### How do we assess your muscles?

The core muscles are, by their nature, very deep. This inaccessibility makes them difficult to check properly, meaning that *most gyms ignore this vital stage*. At PhysioWorks, we use an ultrasound scanner (like those used in pregnancy scans) to actually look at your core muscles. Using this technology, we can see, live on the screen, how your muscles are working. Then you can practice the contractions, using the images as feedback to get it right.



### Does this treatment help?

Research has confirmed that correcting the timing and activation of your core muscles offers massive advantages. For example, one study showed a 50% decrease in the recurrence of back pain when compared with a traditional exercise approach.



### Time to get fit!

If you would like

- ◆ better core muscle control
- ◆ less pain
- ◆ more flexibility, and
- ◆ better sporting performance

then please contact our centres for more information about Pilates classes – with the PhysioWorks difference. We’re starting soon, so ring today!

### Joke of the day



"Nurse, get on the internet, go to SURGERY.COM, scroll down and click on the 'Are you totally lost?' icon."