



Pilates for Hip and Knee Patients

Can Pilates speed post-operative recovery?

by Shirley Archer, JD, MA

A Pilates program specifically designed for patients undergoing knee and hip replacements during the pre- and post-operative phases may speed recovery.

Two reconstructive physicians and two certified Pilates professionals have recommended that patients undergoing total hip or knee arthroplasty follow a protocol of Pilates exercises. The protocol, published in the *Bulletin of the NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases* (2007; 65 (2): 120-25), is based on anecdotal evidence of success with several arthroplasty patients seen by these healthcare practitioners.

As joint arthroplasty procedures become minimally invasive and insurance regulations limit the availability of physical therapy, health professionals are seeking alternative methods of rehabilitation. Pilates is a viable choice because it is readily practiced in the pre- and postoperative phases and because it promotes a whole-body approach to rehabilitation, argue those proposing the Pilates protocol. They support preoperative training to establish muscle memory; to improve strength, mobility and range of motion of the joints; and to develop a trainer-client relationship that will facilitate training after the operation. For the postoperative period they endorse a progressive Pilates practice with exercises that strengthen the core, increase range of motion at the joint and strengthen surrounding muscles.

Randomized clinical trials are needed to analyze the efficacy of Pilates training protocols for joint replacement patients. Until more research studies are conducted, medical personnel should work with certified Pilates professionals to develop appropriate training programs.

FastTips - Eating Mindfully

•Use smaller bowls. People who served themselves foods into smaller serving bowls ate almost 60% less than when they are served helpings in larger bowls.* See it before you eat it. Avoid eating directly from the package. People served a snack mix in a bowl ate 134 fewer calories than those eating straight from the bag.

•Bank your calories. Skip the appetizers if you know you want to save room – and enjoy – the upcoming dessert. You'll also be more accurate at estimating the number of calories you consumed.

• Sit next to the slowest eater at the table: Use that person as a benchmark as to how slow you should eat. Always be the last one to start eating, and set your fork down after every bite.

•Embrace your comfort food: Don't eat around the food you really want. Just eat it in a small portion.

•To eat less without having to think about it, use the rule of two: Pick two of the following three: appetizer, a drink or a dessert.

•Use the "half" rule of thumb: Fill half your plate with vegetables, the other half with protein and starch.

•Think "back." Keep tempting treats in the back of the cupboard or refrigerator wrapped in aluminum foil. Office workers ate 23% less candy (around 50 calories) when it was in an opaque covered candy dish than a see-through dish.

•Always sit at least an arm's length away from a buffet table or snack bowl.

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When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life so that when you die, the world cries and you rejoice."

-- Cherokee Expression



What Does Being Fit Feel Like?

There is an emotional side to keeping your body in shape.

Weight loss, increased flexibility and a better self-image are just a few of the outcomes of regular exercise, but have you ever felt the rush of positive energy that comes from a well-executed workout? After a good workout, you should feel invigorated, calm and happy. If you haven't achieved this feeling, then you might be missing an element to your exercise regimen that can make exercise something you actually want to do.

The Runner's High

Prolonged moderate to intense exercise releases chemicals in the brain called endorphins. These are the same chemicals that are released when you feel excitement and when you orgasm. They create analgesic effects (reduce pain) and give you a sense of well-being.

However, you won't get a runner's high by walking on the treadmill for half an hour or even an hour. This type of exercise simply does not provide an intensity level high enough to cause the release of a large amount of endorphins. You need to take your cardio exercise up to a level where it feels relatively difficult (rated between a 7 and a 9 on a scale of 1 to 10). You also need to do it for an extended period of time, at least one hour or longer.

That's a lot of work to have to do for every workout, especially if you do cardio 3 to 5 times a week! Unless you're training for an endurance race, these workouts won't benefit you and may even cause repetitive use injuries.

Seek Contentment Rather than a High

You may not ever get to a point where you feel high after a workout, but exercising regularly

can still do wonders for your mood. A growing volume of research shows that exercise can also help improve

symptoms of certain mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety.

Exercise may also help prevent a relapse after treatment for depression or anxiety.

Research suggests that it may take at least 30 minutes of exercise a day for at least 3 to 5 days a week to significantly improve depression symptoms, but smaller amounts of activity (as little as 10 to 15 minutes at a time) can improve mood in the short term. How it actually decreases depressive symptoms is not well understood, but some ideas are that it releases muscle tension, helps you sleep better and reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol. It also increases body temperature, which may have calming effects. All of these changes in your mind and body can improve symptoms such as sadness, anxiety, irritability, stress, fatigue, anger, self-doubt and hopelessness.

Even if you're not depressed, exercise can become a way to keep your mood in check, and make it more likely that you'll experience feelings of contentment and peacefulness because you'll feel less tense, tired, stressed and irritable.

Still Hard Work

Why do we still avoid exercise if it can make us happy? The problem with us humans is that we have a hard time being motivated by things that will happen in the far future. If we don't feel content now, it is hard for us to imagine ourselves feeling content sometime in the distant future. It takes months of regular exercise before it can start having permanent effects on our mood.

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Shrimp Ceviche "Cocktail"

Avocados are high in fibre, healthy fats, and are TASTY!

1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 generous pound unpeeled small shrimp
1/2 medium white onion, chopped
1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus sprigs for garnish
1/2 cup ketchup
1 to 2 tablespoons vinegary Mexican bottled hot sauce
About 1 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, optional
1 cup diced peeled cucumber or jicama
1 small ripe avocado, peeled, pitted and cubed
Salt
Several lime slices for garnish
Tostadas, tortilla chips, or saltine crackers for serving



1. Bring 1 quart salted water to a boil and add 2 tablespoons of the lime juice. Scoop in the shrimp, cover and let the water return to the boil. Immediately remove from the heat, set the lid askew and pour off all the liquid. Replace the cover and let the shrimp steam off the heat for 10 minutes. Spread out the shrimp in a large glass or stainless steel bowl to cool completely. Peel and devein the shrimp if you wish: One by one lay the shrimp on your work surface, make a shallow incision down the back and scrape out the (usually) dark intestinal tract. Toss the shrimp with the remaining 1/2 lime juice, cover and refrigerate for about an hour.

2. In a small strainer, rinse the onion under cold water, then shake off the excess liquid. Add to the shrimp bowl along with the cilantro, ketchup, hot sauce, optional olive oil, cucumber and/or jicama and avocado. Taste and season with salt, usually about 1/2 teaspoon. Cover and refrigerate if not serving immediately.

3. Spoon ceviche into sundae glasses, martini glasses, or small bowls: garnish with sprigs of cilantro and slices of lime. Serve with tostadas, tortilla chips or saltines to enjoy alongside.



The ceviche is best made the day it is served.

Makes 6 appetizer servings.

Fit, from page 2

This is why so many of us, although we know that exercise will make us feel better, don't stick with a regular routine. It is too intangible, too vague.

Make it Happen

If reading the phrase "be happy" could make you feel happy, I could end this article right here and you would never have to read another article about exercise and feeling good ever again. My point is that contentment doesn't come from willing it upon yourself, or repeating positive phrases to yourself that you think are silly, or by reading a thousand articles on why you should exercise. Everything happens in its own time.

But I will personally guarantee you that if you just stick with exercising regularly, you will eventually feel better about yourself. If you sometimes have to force yourself to get to the gym, or you make yourself spend an extra five minutes on the treadmill, good things will come of it. I know this because I too lose motivation to exercise from time to time. Sometimes I have to push myself to get on the treadmill, or to do one more set of chest presses, but after I do it, I feel better because I did it. It involves feelings of accomplishment and those endorphins really do help me along. I don't feel a high after I exercise, but I certainly do feel better after I exercise than I did before. And that's what keeps me going.



CURTIS CORNER

THE ART OF SLEEP - A CORNERSTONE OF QUALITY LIVING

Sleeping, or the lack of, can significantly affect our health, energy, productivity, looks, safety, longevity, ability to handle situations, and outlook on life. Statistics show that 42% of all healthy, middle aged women report some kind of sleep problem. For 65 years and older, this percentage drops to 30% and almost 17% of all 21-30 year olds report insomnia of some kind.

Sleep deprivation has serious side effects on the brain's ability to function and, if continued over long periods of time, can impair language, memory, planning and sense of time. Even mild levels of sleep deprivation and has been shown to be linked to increase in weight and obesity. It also puts the body into a state of high alert and a heightened risk for a variety of major illnesses: cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, by affecting crucial hormones and proteins that play a role in these diseases. To put it mildly, sleep is one of the key cornerstones of quality living!

So how much is enough? We all know of people who can run on five hours per night and others who cannot function on fewer than eight. The amount required varies from person to person. The average person sleeps 7.5 hours per night but that amount is dropping.

Causes of poor sleep vary from person to person. Certain habits and ingredients clearly should be avoided: caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, a sleep disturbing bedroom, erratic schedule, chocolate, refined carbohydrates, foods that cause gas, heartburn, indigestion, foods that are high in proteins and large meals too close to bed time all contribute to disturbing the sleep cycle.

Sleep and "how to" is largely still a mystery. A possible 'best options' list includes: a quiet bedroom, relaxing prior to bedtime, following a bedtime routine, exercise daily, and an awareness of sleep-disturbing and promoting foods. Foods high in complex carbohydrates have a mild sleep enhancing effect by increasing serotonin, a sleep enhancing hormone. Other popular sleep assistants include a glass of warm milk, lettuce, dill, basil, and fruits such as mulberries and lemons.

Other "sleep ezzzz" tips to help you improve your quality of life include: identify the amount of sleep you need to be fully alert all day long, and get that amount every night; go to bed at the same time every night and wake up without using an alarm clock at the same time every morning, including weekends - 7 days a week, 365 days a year; get your required amount of sleep in one continuous block, as six hours of good deep sleep is often more restorative than eight hours of fragmented sleep. An occasional late night won't do much damage to your alertness; remember, reducing sleep by one hour for seven nights has the same effect as staying awake for 24 hours once a week. Make sure you pay back your sleep debt in a timely fashion, meaning go to bed earlier than usual and return to your sleep schedule ASAP.

Take time to learn more about your unique sleep patterns. Take yourself lightly and your sleep seriously.



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