IMPROVING POSTURE

THROUGH PILATES EXERCISES

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ABSTRACT

WE HAVE DIFFERENT BODY SHAPES AND SIZES, BROAD OR NARROW SHOULDERS, LONG OR SHORT TORSO, BIG OR SMALL CURVES, IT’S A LONG LIST.

IN PILATES THE GOAL IS TO CONDITION AND STRENGTHEN THE BODY YOU HAVE TO A GOOD ALINEMENT.

THE DAILY ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SITTING OR STANDING FOR LONG HOURS, CARRYING HEAVY LOADS, WORKING AT THE DESK FOR MANY HOURS MAY CAUSE SPINAL MISALIGNMENT AND TENSIONS IN BACK AND SHOULDERS.

AS A RESULT BODY COMPENSATES FOR THE DEVIATION CREATING MUSCULATURE IMBALANCES.

POSTURE WILL AFFECT EVERY ACTION. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A GOOD ALIGNMENT OF BODY WHICH HELPS NORMAL AND EFFICIENT FUNCTIONING OF THE INNER ORGANS.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract
Common Types of Bad Posture
Spine Anatomy
Case Study
Exercise Program
Conclusion
Bibliography
COMMON TYPES OF A BAD POSTURE

Sway Back
Lumbar Lordosis
Thoracic Kyphosis
Forward Head
Good Posture
SPINE ANATOMY
Sway Back or Fatigue back is abnormal bent back posture. It is accompanied by weak abdominals, neck and upper back, tight hamstrings and lower back.

Lumber Lordosis is an increased lumber curve of spine is accompanied by an anterior tilt of pelvis. It is associated with the weak abdominals, tight lower back extensors and hip flexors.

Thoracic Kyphosis involves an increase thoracic curve in spine. Correction focuses on strengthening the thoracic extensors and stretching the anterior shoulder muscles.

Forward Head caused by a bad habits (sitting at your computer or looking down at your phone). It is accompanied by rounded upper back and forward shoulders which can lead to more pain in the neck, shoulders and upper back.

Scoliosis involves one or more lateral curvatures of spine, primarily in the coronal plane. Flat Back is a type of posture that is characterized by the lack of natural curves in spine. The spine imbalance that can create muscle fatigue, pain and difficulty standing upright.
The human spine is a complex anatomic structure that provides several important functions.

• Protecting the spinal cord and nerves
• Structural support for the body, allowing us to stand upright. The spine supports about half the weight of the body.

The average person is born with 33 individual bones, the vertebrae that interact and connect with each other through flexible joints called facets.

The bottom of the spine is called the sacrum. It is made up of several vertebral bodies usually fused together as one. The remaining small bones or ossicles below the sacrum are also fused together and called the tailbone or coccyx.

The spine above the sacrum consists of:
• Seven bones in the neck—the cervical spine.
• 12 bones in the chest—the thoracic spine
• Five bones in the lower back—the lumbar spine.
• The spinal column is made up of many parts, all designed to help the back move flexibly, support body weight. Slouching and hunching over can degrade health of the spine over time, causing added pressure and tension which can end up harming the central nervous system eventually.
STUDY CASE

I used myself in my study case because I have an excessive lumber lordosis and extremely tight hamstrings.

I was actively involved in different kinds of sports from 7 years old. I played volleyball, did ballet and gymnastics when I was growing. I started experiencing back pain much later and even didn’t realize at that point what caused the pain.
I continued being very active doing yoga and playing golf regularly and got injured 5 years ago.
The bulging disk caused a lot of pain in my low back and caused a sciatica pain.
The injury made me look closer to my sports and daily routine and as a result brought me to Pilates classes.
One of the discoveries was my bad posture and particularly excessive lordosis in my lumber area that created a huge pressure in my lumber area over the years. I was ready for that kind of injury due to my bad posture over years, my surgeon said.
I started doing physiotherapy to manage my sciatica pain and was directed to do pilates. The goal was to help me to get awareness of my body. I began with a couple classes a week combining with stretch classes. But later I added pilates up to 4/5 class a week. The result was obvious: decreasing of my pain, increasing mobility of my spine and in hip area, building strength in back. The most important was improving my posture.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basi block system</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warm up</td>
<td>Roll down, Pelvic Curl, Chest Lift, Chest Lift with Rotation</td>
<td>Warm up the spine and abdominals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwork (Reformer)</td>
<td>Parallel heels and toes, V position toes, Open V heels and toes, Single leg heel and toe, Calf raises, Prances</td>
<td>Activate hamstrings and quads, stabilize pelvis, strengthening and stretching hips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdominal (Reformer) Abdominal (Cadillac)</td>
<td>100s prep, 100s Mini rolls-up, Mini rolls-ups Oblique</td>
<td>Strengthening abdominals/oblique area, working on neutral pelvis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip work (Reformer)</td>
<td>Frog, Circle down/up, Openings</td>
<td>Focusing on Pelvic Lumbar stabilization, Hip adductor strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinal Articulation (Wunda chair) Spinal Articulation (Reformer)</td>
<td>Pelvic Curl, Bottom lift with extensions</td>
<td>Working on neutral spine, Strengthening abdominals, hamstring, strengthening abdominals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stretches (Reformer)</td>
<td>Lunge standing, Lunge kneeling</td>
<td>Stretching hip flexors, hamstrings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full body integration (Cadillac)</td>
<td>Scooter, Round back, Flat Back Reverse Knee Stretch</td>
<td>Focusing on trunk stabilization, Strengthening abdominals, back extensors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arm Work (Wunda Chair)</td>
<td>Triceps Press Sit, Triceps Prone, Frog Back</td>
<td>Focusing on Trunk/Scapular stabilization,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg Work (Reformer)</td>
<td>Single Leg Skating, Side Split</td>
<td>Focusing on Pelvic lumbar stabilization, Hip abductor strength/stretch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral Flexion/Rotation, (Reformer) Wunda chair</td>
<td>Mermaid Side Kneeling Stretch</td>
<td>Improving spinal mobility, focusing on spinal stabilization, strengthening abdominals/oblique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Extension (Cadillac) Wunda chair Cadillac</td>
<td>Breaststroke Prep Swan Basic, Back extension single arm, Swan on Floor Prone 1</td>
<td>Strengthening back extensors, Working on Scapular stabilization, abdominal control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSION

I have been doing Mat Pilates for the last 4 years for rehabilitations. I am able to manage my pain and do my daily activities without difficulty these days.

I still continue working on my back extensors and hip flexibility. I greatly improved my strength in abdominals and core muscles.

I enrolled in BASI graduate program so I can learn more about the body anatomy and be able to do much more on apparatus (Reformer, Wunda Chair, Cadillac) to make myself stronger and prevent the injuries in the future.

Getting positive results and improving my posture I am confident that I can help other people with the faulty posture and other problems connected to the physical well-being.

I have no doubt that posture is one of the key to keep the healthy body and should never be neglected.

Pilates exercises can help to improve body alignment, get stronger, gain flexibility and prevent from developing bad health conditions further in life.
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