Pilates for Posture

The connection with poor posture and a range of musculoskeletal problems has been well established for some time. Most of us have been told since we were young to stand and sit up straight and most would admit to having difficulty in maintaining these ideal upright postures over the course of the day, regularly finding ourselves succumbing to gravity and flopping. Often, over time, these poor postures can start to become habitual and we become less aware that we are not holding ourselves well.



Pilates is often espoused as a great form of exercise to help improve posture, but exactly what is it about Pilates that helps us improve our postural habits? Broadly in the body there are two different muscle systems, stabilisers and movement muscles. Our stabilising muscles tend to be the muscles that we use to hold good upright posture. This system of muscles tends to be slow twitch, endurance muscles, which are good at gripping and holding for a length of time to keep us upright stabilising the trunk in the most optimal position for decreased load to the joints and muscles.

Pilates is a mind-body intervention that focuses on core stability, posture, flexibility, strength, breathing, and movement control. Pilates places a large focus on our stabilising muscles, building strength and endurance in this group of muscles and better enabling them to do their job well.

Pilates is certainly not just about strength though. Often over time due to poor posture or injury, we can develop altered patterns of movement which load the tissues of the body poorly and make us prone to pain and injury. A large part of Pilates is involved in teaching the brain to move and hold us, using more efficient movement patterns and postures. Pilates helps to build an awareness of what these patterns and postures are and when we are adopting them.

As Physios, we are often asked ‘which exercise will fix my posture?’. Sadly, the true answer to this is none of them will magically correct poor posture. While Pilates is excellent for building strength and endurance in your postural muscles and teaching you good patterns of movement, the key to good posture still involves a conscious awareness of applying these movement patterns and postures throughout the day. The good news is that the more you focus on doing this, the more these patterns start to become the new habit and the more they will start to occur on a subconscious level.

If you are interested in undertaking some Pilates to help with your posture, assist in rehab from an injury or would just like to

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improve your core, contact the practice https://www.ibphysio.com.au/contact-us/ to enquire about our small group equipment classes

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