

10 a day Pilates Exercises

If you feel like it!!

“One must wait until the evening, to see how splendid the day has been”

Sophocles



By Carole Barker

Illustrations by Vicky-Jade Harmsworth

INDEX

My story & how I coped	Page 1 to 2
How to use the booklet	Page 3
Anatomy notes	Page 4
Your 10-a-day Pilates exercises	Page 5 to 18
Useful contacts	Page 19
Big thank you's	Page 20

MY STORY

In March 2005 I had an Autologous stem-cell transplant for low-grade follicular non-Hodgkin's at the Hammersmith Hospital, London.

I found the process a truly exhausting experience, but not a terrible one. I was first diagnosed in the winter of 1995. During these 10 years leading up to my transplant, I had various courses of chemotherapy, radiotherapy and immunotherapy and was dreading having a transplant.

Well here I am 2 years on, leading a really healthy and happy life, and thank God no re-occurrence. It was worth it.

I was a professional dancer till my 30's and then taught dance and exercise, so when I was diagnosed at the age of 41, I was absolutely terrified and furious in equal measure. I thought, "How come this has happened to me? I have always looked after my body, eaten well. This is supposed to happen to fat "B's" that smoke and slob around all day – this is not fair". This was followed by 4 days of a whisky-only diet, crying and fury, no sleep and terrible levels of fear and anxiety. I hated doctors, loathed hospitals and illness in me or anyone else. I wanted to wake up from the awful nightmare. Slowly, slowly, as we all have to do, we accept our situation and try and lead normal lives.

HOW I COPE

We all find different ways of coping but I thought that if in any way I could share with others what helped me, it might help you.

I am now a Body Control® Pilates teacher and have found this method extremely helpful in keeping me physically and mentally strong.

The booklet I have written can help you keep your body in good shape whilst you go through the transplant process. Most of the exercises are done sitting on a chair or lying on a bed. Each exercise is described fully; it would help if you get a friend to read out the instructions for you. Be kind to yourself, if you are feeling really ill, do nothing. At those times I found listening to beautiful music or audio books really useful. Friends and family are also very upset seeing you go through these hard times, they feel so frustrated that they can not do anything. Get them to make a tape of all your favourite music, let them find really funny books/poems to cheer you up, it helps. I also found really sad poems and sad books great too, it is good to know we are not the only ones suffering. Choose what makes you feel good.

Doing a little exercise each day can help with back/neck ache, constipation and boredom - also you are helping yourself by taking control of your body. Sometimes it felt like my body was not mine any more, people just kept doing unpleasant things to me.

Rationally I knew there was a purpose to all this – emotionally I wanted to run away.

Another thing I found really useful was having a massage (you can get the wonderful masseuse Sally at the Hammersmith who is brilliant). It's so lovely to have something that feels good and pleasurable. Remind your body that life is not all drips and needles.

Up until I became neutropenic I walked up and down the corridors and outside as much as my energy levels permitted.

So apart from doing my Pilates I found these and the following strategies helpful. "EACH TO THEIR OWN".

MY STRATEGIES

1. Get your friends to bring in scrumptious and nourishing food. Hospital food can be unappetising. My friends brought me in ready-made organic food from M&S or home-made food. When you are neutropenic, oranges and bananas are not the only fruit: avocados, mango, kiwi, paw paw, lychees – yum. Anything you can peel. During the whole 5 weeks I only lost 2 kilos (4lbs). If you lose loads of weight you will also be losing muscle mass, not good, so eat as much as you can. I found water and tea disgusting, my taste buds had altered. I found the little packs of Caribbean, apple and mango juice from Sainsbury's and Waitrose really good. I also ate loads of Twiglets, Marmite is such a strong flavour that it takes away unpleasant tastes in the mouth.
2. Have quiet time. The constant flow of nurses, doctors, cleaners, handymen, visitors etc... is really tiring. On the board outside my room I had written up not to be disturbed between 2-4pm. I found space for me and quiet time really helpful.
3. I used Speizia products on my body which helped with my flaky skin. I found these very soothing. www.speiziaorganics.com
4. Do not watch stuff on TV that is distressing - you need to keep in good mental shape, I found I was quite weepy: why cry more than you need to?
5. People often don't know what to say. A slender friend of mine when first diagnosed with breast cancer was told by her friend "That's unbelievable, you don't even have breasts!" I always got "That's impossible, you look so well, you'll be all right," I was reading an article about Nigella Lawson who has had several close relations with cancer and she said "You have to listen to what people mean, not what they say". That observation has helped me a lot.

The other thing I do now, if an acquaintance/friend/family member starts to tell me grizzly cancer stories about someone they know, is to ask "Does this have a happy ending? If not, I really don't want to hear this". Why should you become the repository for other people's negativity and pain?

You have enough dealing with your own problems. Oh! And the other thing that infuriates me is, "You must stay positive". When you were 100% well, did you wake up every morning happy as a lark? Some mornings yes, some mornings no, some mornings absolutely foul. And there is no reason to change - just because you have cancer, you do not have to become a saint. Sainthood takes an awful lot of energy, better use that energy to help yourself get well. End of rant!

I hope you find these exercises helpful; I would love to set up an exercise program with Pilates teachers for everyone undergoing cancer treatment. Who knows, in the future we might be able to get some Body Control® Pilates teachers in every "Maggie's Centre" in England.

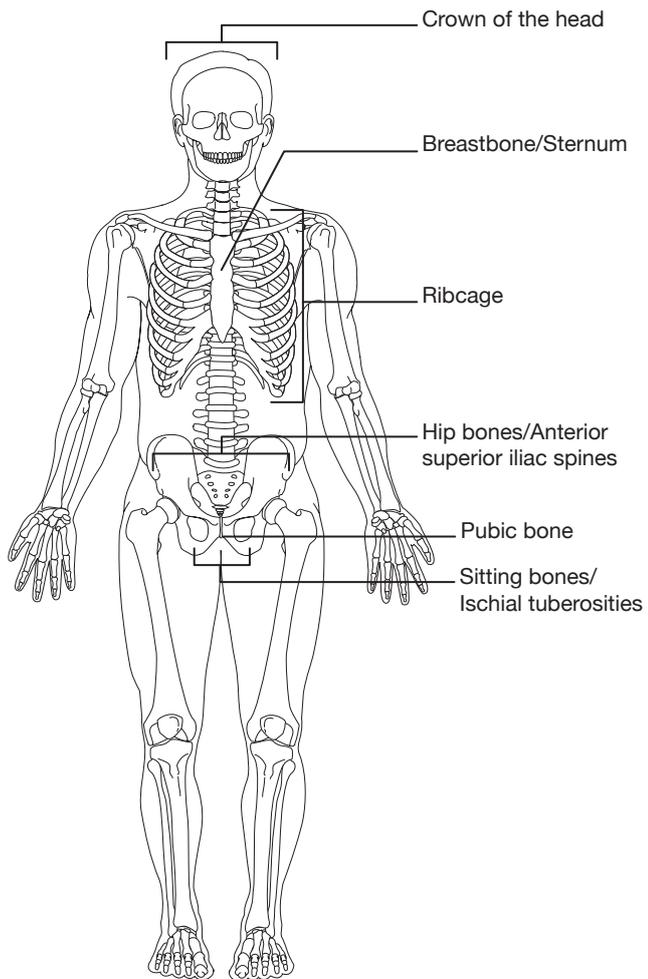
I could not have had a kinder and calmer consultant than Dr. Kanfer. Thank you so much. The nurses were so understanding, useful and kind. I remember the day they put my stem cells back and a couple of nurses popped in and wished me happy birthday. I said, "It's not my birthday" and they said, "It is, this is the start of your new life". That gave me a tremendous boost. So take it from this 3 year old, you can get through this and the sun can shine again, Good luck all of you.

HOW TO USE THE BOOKLET

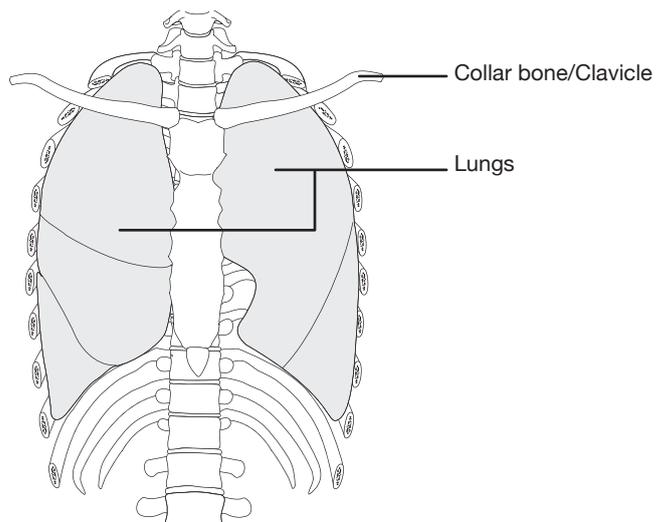
1. Do take time to look at the pictures to give you a good idea of alignment and positioning.
2. It's best to start at the beginning and work your way through. The exercises are like building blocks. First you get in the correct position and learn to breathe. Then you learn how to work your core stability (exercises 1-3). The rest of the exercises flow one after the other; however, from 4 onwards you could do these in any order you like depending on how you feel.
3. I have taken into consideration your hick-man line, so I have done no big arm movements or back extensions. Once you have had your hick-man line removed you can incorporate those types of movement.
4. During my transplant my eyesight and concentration became a bit dire (everything did get back to normal after a couple of months), so if you can get a friend/nurse (if they have time) to read the instructions out, that would be helpful.
5. Only do the exercises when you want to.

A FEW ANATOMY NOTES

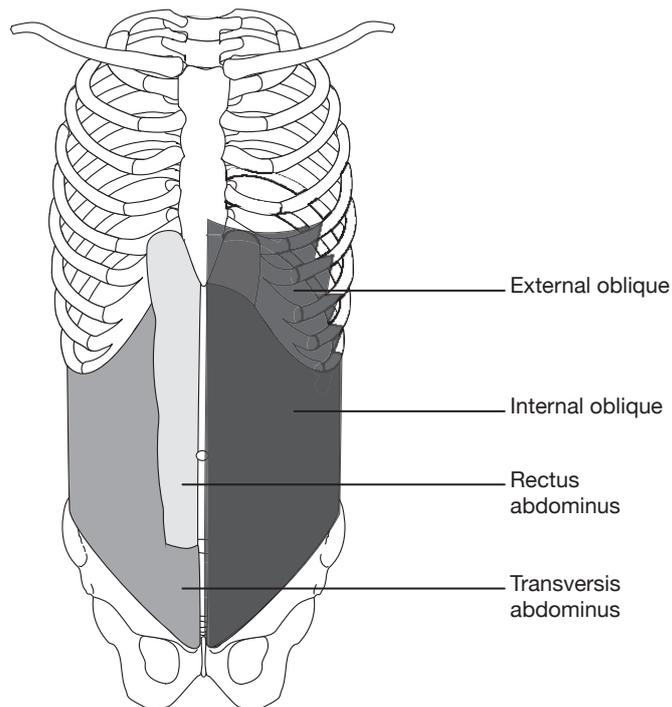
SKELETON



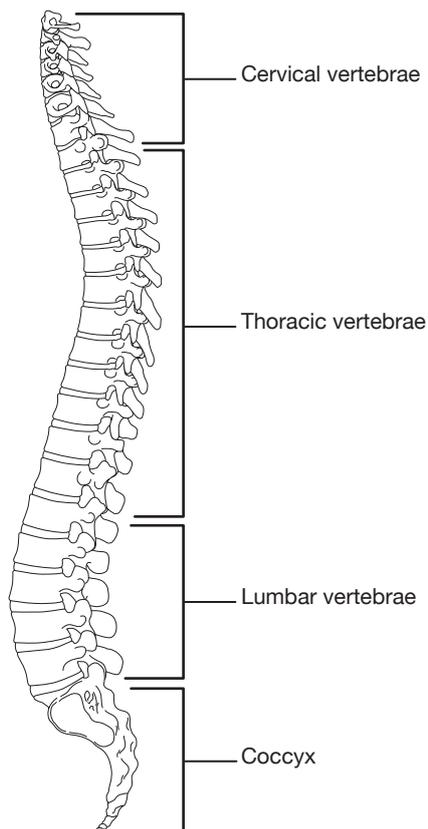
RIBCAGE



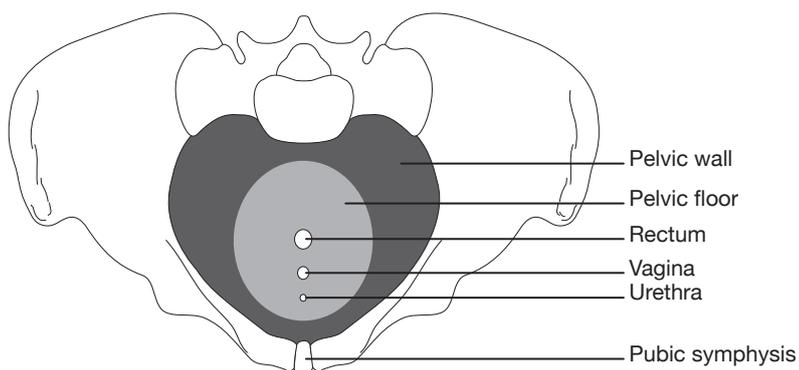
ABDOMINAL MUSCLES



SPINE



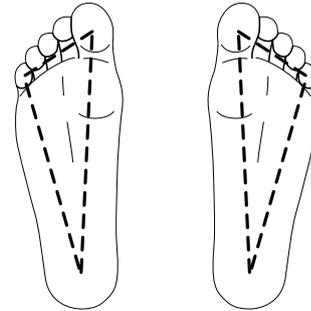
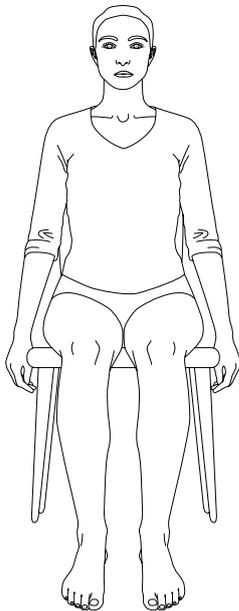
PELVIC FLOOR



CHAIR EXERCISES

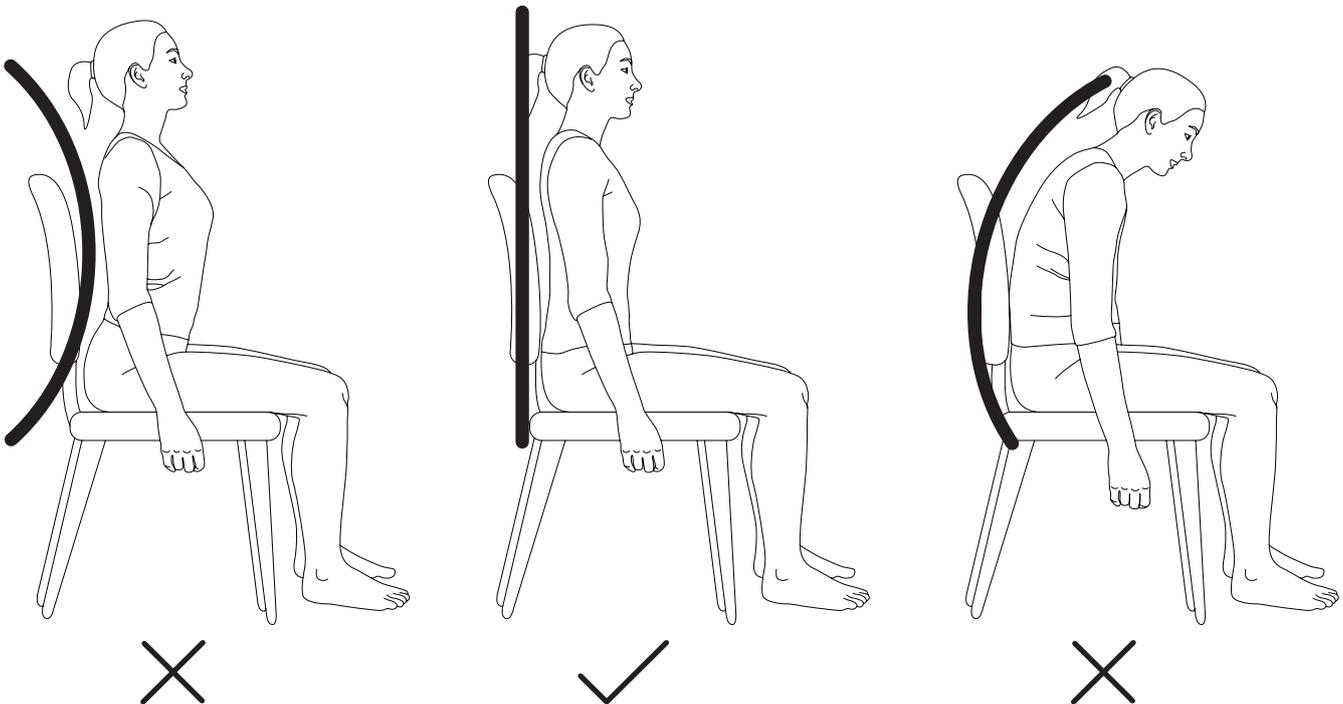
Position

Sit with good alignment.



Sit on a chair. Feet firmly on the floor.
Knees hip width apart by approximately 10cm
(4 inches).
Your weight evenly distributed on both buttocks.

Glance down at your feet to make sure that they are parallel and that you can feel equal pressure on the big toe joint, little toe joint and centre of the heel. Imagine you have a triangle under the foot.



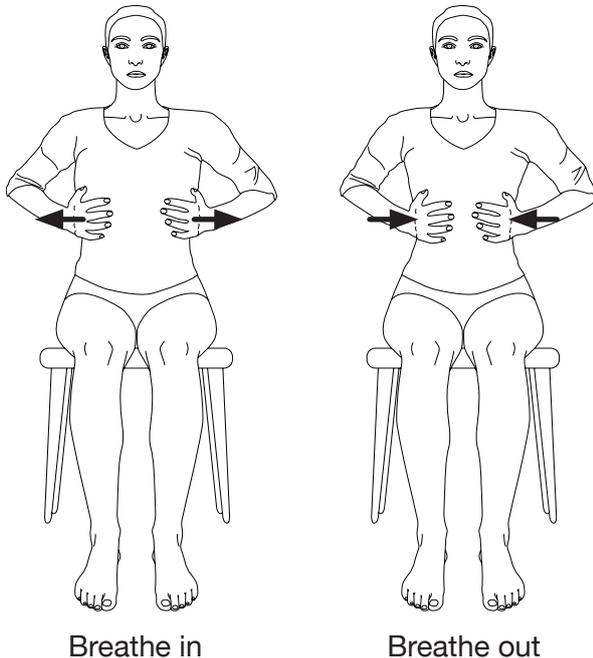
Sense that you have a pole behind your back, and that you are trying to reach the crown of your head as high up the pole as possible.

1. LATERAL BREATHING

Position

Sit in good alignment.

Place your hands on the sides of your lower ribs.



Action

Breathe in slowly for a count of five.

Breathe out for a count of five.

As you breathe in, feel your ribs expanding out sideways like bellows.

As you exhale, feel the ribs close down.

Technique

Try to think of the movement only happening in the sides and the back of the ribs.

Keep sitting tall, relaxing the shoulders. Watch you do not hike them up to your ears as you breathe in.

Try to keep your lower abdominals as still as possible. If you have done Yoga, it is not like abdominal breathing: think of all the action taking place in the sides and back of your ribs.

When you breathe out, exhale all of the stale air from your lungs as you keep lengthening your spine up the pole. *Don't slump!*

Why?

Feelings of anxiety can be very prevalent when we are undergoing difficult treatment. Taking controlled deep breaths helps us to relax and feel more in control.

Focusing on the breathing helps to energise our muscles and therefore perform our Pilates exercises more effectively. This technique allows us to hold the lower abdominals concave whilst relaxing the upper body and breathing freely as we move.

Duration

Breathe in for a count of 5 and breathe out for a count of 5; repeat 5 times.

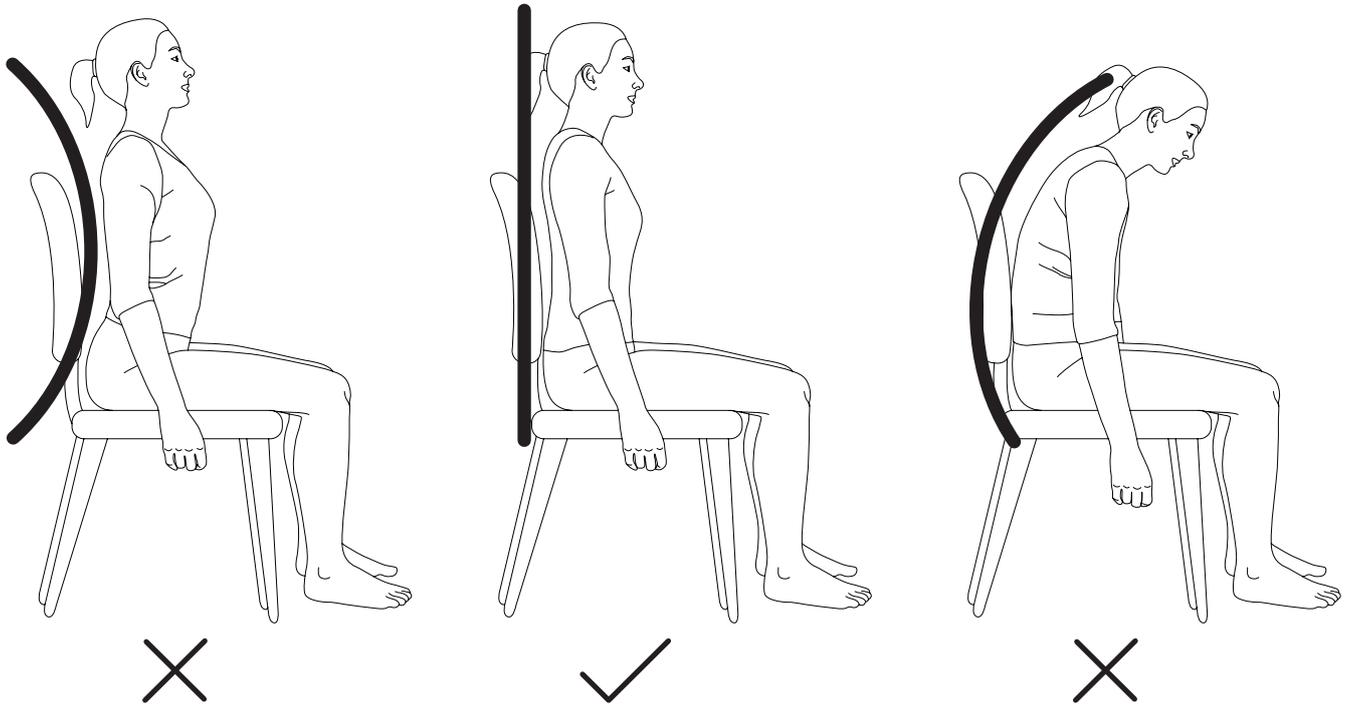
NB

You can also practice this exercise lying down if you feel too tired to sit up on a chair.

2. ENGAGING THE PELVIC FLOOR

Position

Sit in good alignment as you did with your breathing exercises.



Action

To activate your pelvic floor muscles (men have them too!) imagine you are trying to stop the flow of urine by contracting your internal muscles, and then relax them.

Breathe in to lengthen the spine.
Exhale, slowly draw up the pelvic floor.
Breathe in, keep holding the pelvic floor up.
Exhale, slowly release the muscles.

Do not think of this as a massive internal squeeze, but as a controlled deep connection. It should not feel uncomfortable. Try to work these muscles at 30% of your full effort.

Duration

Repeat 5 times.

Progression

This time, once you have drawn the pelvic floor up, hold for five whole breaths and then slowly release.

This exercise is harder than the previous one, so if you are having a bad day, just try the first one. You can also do this on your back, front, or side.

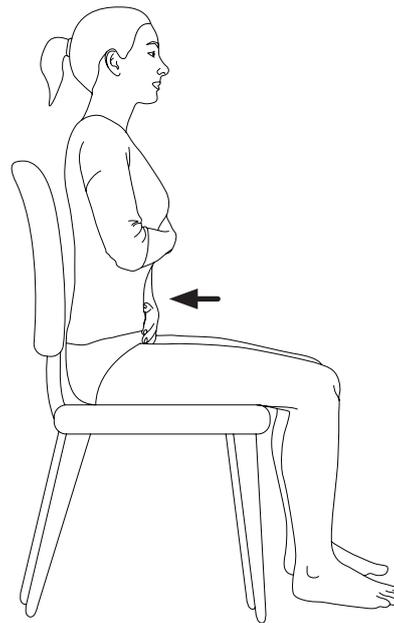
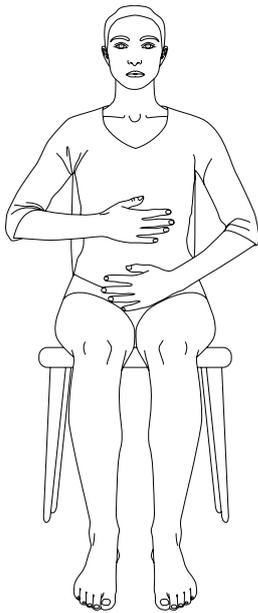
Technique

Keep the buttock muscles relaxed and shoulders still. Do not hold the breath.

3. DRAWING NAVEL TO SPINE

Position

Maintain good sitting alignment.



Place one hand just above the pubic bone and the other under the breast bone. Lower and upper abdominals are relaxed.

Action

Breathe in and lengthen the spine. Exhale, gently drawing in your navel by 1-2cm (approx. 1 inch). Keep drawing in the lower tummy for 5 breaths and then release.

Duration

Repeat 5 times.

Technique

Think of the movement happening between the pubic bone and tummy button. You should feel your stomach muscles gently drawing away from your lower hand and back towards your spine. Try not to draw the muscles under the top hand in: keep these relaxed so you can breathe easily.

It takes quite a lot of effort to be able to isolate our lower abdominals.

Buttocks and shoulders stay relaxed *and a smile would be good.*

Progression

The full exercise (once you have mastered the preparation) is on the following page.

3+ ENGAGING PELVIC FLOOR AND DRAWING NAVEL TO SPINE

Position

Good sitting alignment; hands relaxed by your sides.

Action

Inhale, lengthen the spine.

Exhale, draw up the pelvic floor and then draw your navel towards your spine.

It's very important to continue to inhale and exhale for 5 breaths while holding this contraction, and to breathe laterally. Then slowly release your tummy muscles.

Duration

Repeat 5 times.

Technique

We are trying to isolate our pelvic floor and transversis muscle.

Keep buttocks, feet, shoulders, arms and hands relaxed.

Sit tall, keep your chin on a level, maintain good lateral breathing throughout.

Why?

This will help to give you a strong centre thereby strengthening your back.

It can also help with incontinence problems.

This technique, involving lateral breathing and keeping a strong centre, is one of the bedrocks that the Pilates technique is based on.

It can assist with your daily life, lifting heavy objects, playing whatever sport of your choice and even running a marathon!

Physically this is not a hard exercise to achieve, but to be able to co-ordinate the engagement of the deep stabilising muscles and breathe at the same time, takes a lot of mental effort and focus to begin with.

So, whilst you are lying in bed, tired and bored, this may help take your mind off things. Plus you will be helping yourself to maintain your strength and get back to being your strong vibrant self (alas it does not help us to win the lottery!).

N.B.

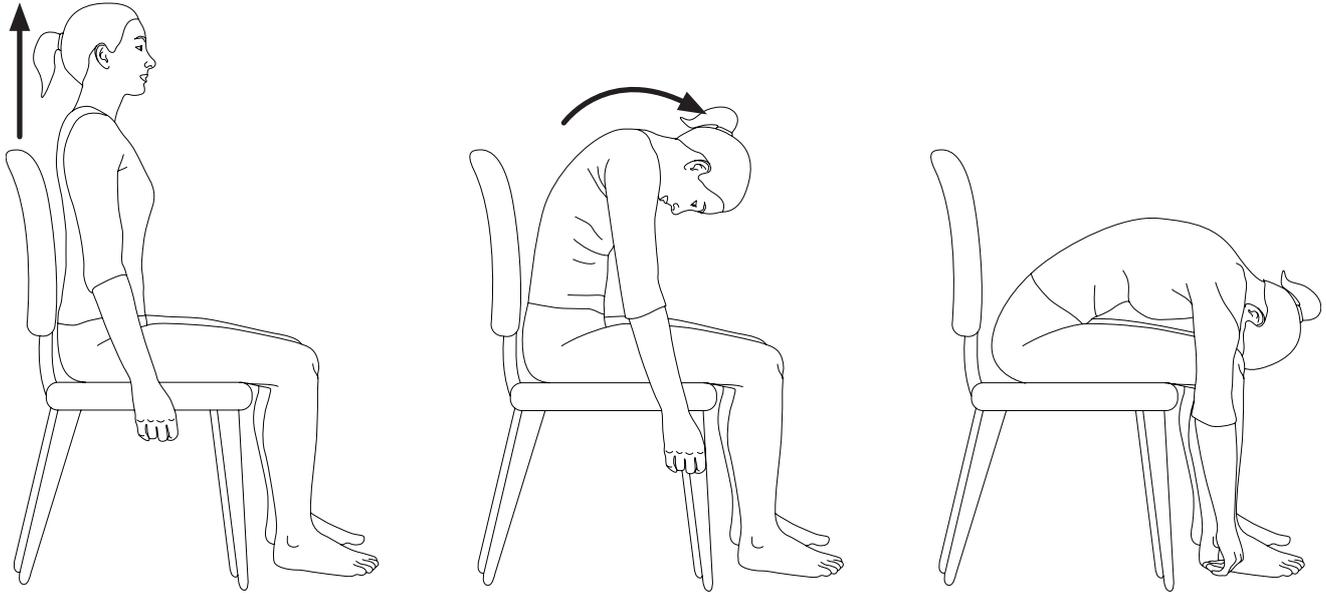
Sometimes we refer to engaging the pelvic floor as “zipping”, and drawing navel to spine as “hollowing”. With most of the exercises, we “zip and hollow” first, and then proceed with the exercise.

4. ROLL DOWNS

Position

Sit on a chair in good alignment.

Imagine you are a donkey with very long ears pointing up to the ceiling!



Action

Breathe in, lengthen the spine, think long ears up to the ceiling. Exhale, draw up the pelvic floor and draw in navel to spine.

Starting with your ears, lengthen them up and over, draw your eyes down towards your chest, nod the head (chin to chest) and slowly wheel down to the floor, vertebra by vertebra. Keep drawing your “navel to spine” as you roll down.

Take a breath in at the bottom. Exhale, zip and hollow, and re-stack the spine starting from your tailbone. Slowly wheel the spine back vertebra by vertebra until you are sitting tall.

Duration

Repeat 5 times.

Technique

Ideally you try to roll down in one slow breath. Exhale to roll down, inhale at the bottom, and exhale as you wheel the spine back up. However, take as many breaths as **you** need, as long as you keep your strong centre by drawing your pelvic floor up and your lower abdominals in.

Think of moving each vertebra separately. Head first, then shoulders. Keep your shoulders and neck relaxed throughout. Allow your breastbone and ribs to draw in towards the body. Lastly, feel your waist roll over and then your lower back. Reverse the process to sit up.

Why?

Joseph Pilates said, “If you have a stiff spine at 20, you are old and if you have a supple spine at 60 you are young”.

When we are inactive, the spine can become stiff and rigid which can lead to backache. Gaining segmental control of our spine helps it to become strong and supple. After all, we all want to be young when we grow up!

If you don't have any back problems - once you have rolled down to the floor, stay there for a while and give your lower back an extra stretch. When you want to come up, re-engage your pelvic floor and transversus muscle (navel to spine) and slowly roll back up. This can help if your back is feeling achy from lying in bed.

5. WAIST TURNS

Position

Check that you have equal pressure on your “sit bones” and that your shoulders are square to the front.



Place your left hand on the outside of your right knee.
Take your right arm behind your back, and place your right hand on the seat of your chair, your fingers facing away from your body.

Action

Breathe in and lengthen through the spine.
Exhale, zip and hollow, turn the whole of the upper body to your right side as if you are trying to look behind you.
Inhale, try and turn a little more.
Exhale, return to the start position.
Change arm position and repeat on your left side.

Duration

Repeat 5 times alternately.

Technique

When you turn your body keep your hips still.

To begin - look at your knees and make sure they are on a level with each other.

As you turn to the right, make sure that your right knee doesn't draw back towards you. The same thing applies when you turn left. Once you have checked your knee alignment, lengthen up through the crown of your head and continue to turn your upper body.

Think of keeping your torso as lengthened as possible. As you turn, keep your shoulders over your hips, and do not lean back or bend sideways at the waist.

Why?

This stimulates the muscles in your upper back and neck as well as working the oblique muscles in your abdomen, so you are strengthening your back, abdominals, and helping to maintain flexibility in the thoracic part (upper back) of your spine. In Yoga, they believe this movement helps to encourage bowel movements. So if you are constipated, see if it helps!

6. SIDE REACH

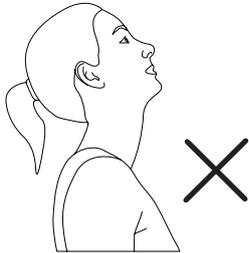
Position

Sit further forward on your chair so your arms can hang by your sides.

Chin on a level.

Think of lifting the crown of your head up to the ceiling. Try not to shorten the back of your neck.

Shoulders are gently drawing down: think of having as much space as possible between your ears and shoulders. Long, long neck.

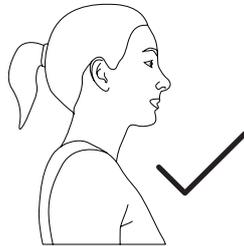


Incorrect head alignment

Chin up.

Short at the back of the neck.

Eyes looking up.

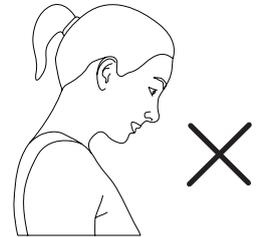


Correct head alignment

Chin on a level.

Long in the back of your neck.

Looking straight in front of you.

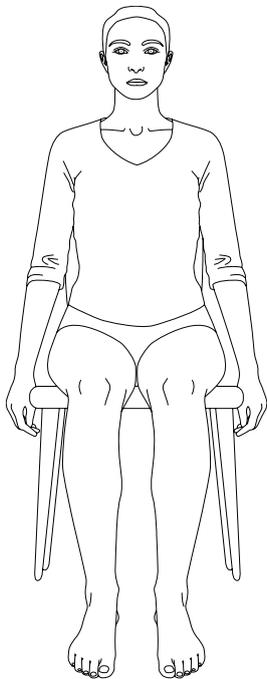


Incorrect head alignment

Chin down.

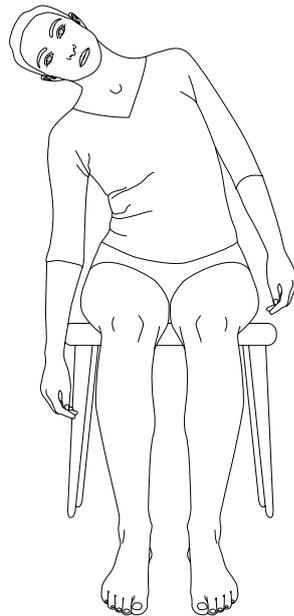
Short at the front of the neck.

Eyes looking down.



Action

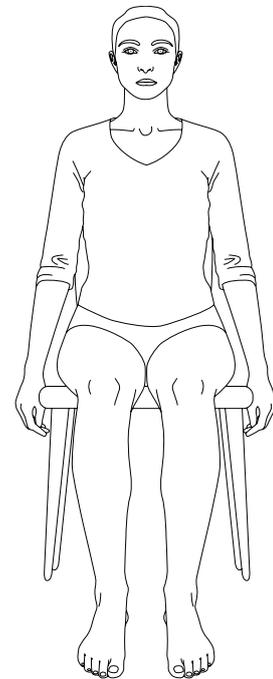
Inhale, think of lifting your upper body away from your hips.



Exhale, reach your body over to the side, your hand reaches towards the floor.

Do not try to touch the floor.

Inhale, stay still and maintain your zip and hollow.



Exhale, come back to start position.

Repeat on the other side.

Duration

Repeat 6 times alternately.

Technique

As you lift up and out of your hips, keep the shoulders square and your eyes focused directly in front of you. As you reach over to the right, keep your neck long and chin on a level.

Be aware that you are keeping equal pressure on your “sit bones” (you are not lifting one side of your bottom off the seat).

Why?

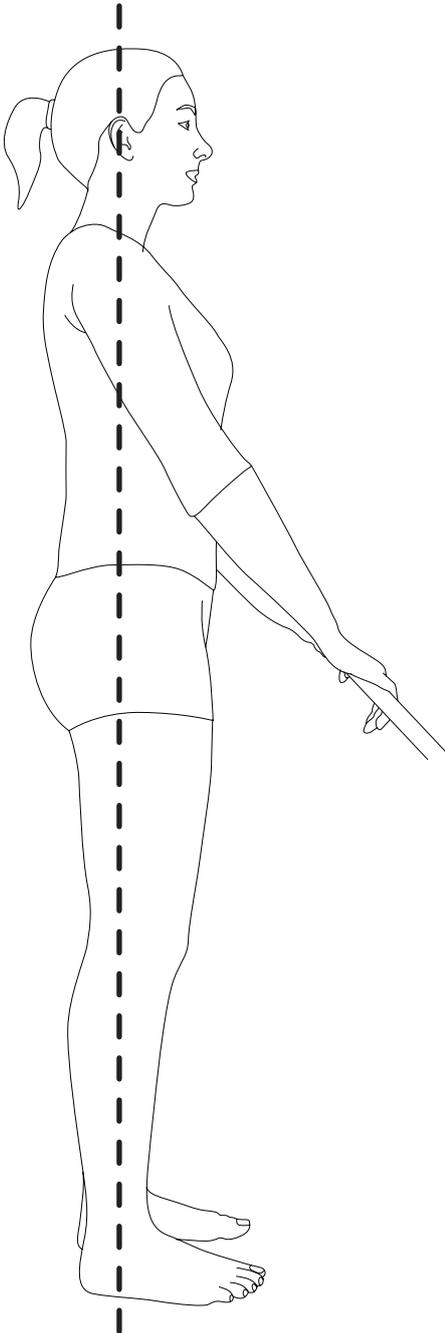
It helps to stretch and tone the sides of your body.

STANDING EXERCISES

Position

Stand with good alignment.

Stand by the end of your bed and place your hands on the bed rail. If it is too low, get a friend or a nurse to raise it.



Head: imagine you are trying to reach the crown of your head to the ceiling.

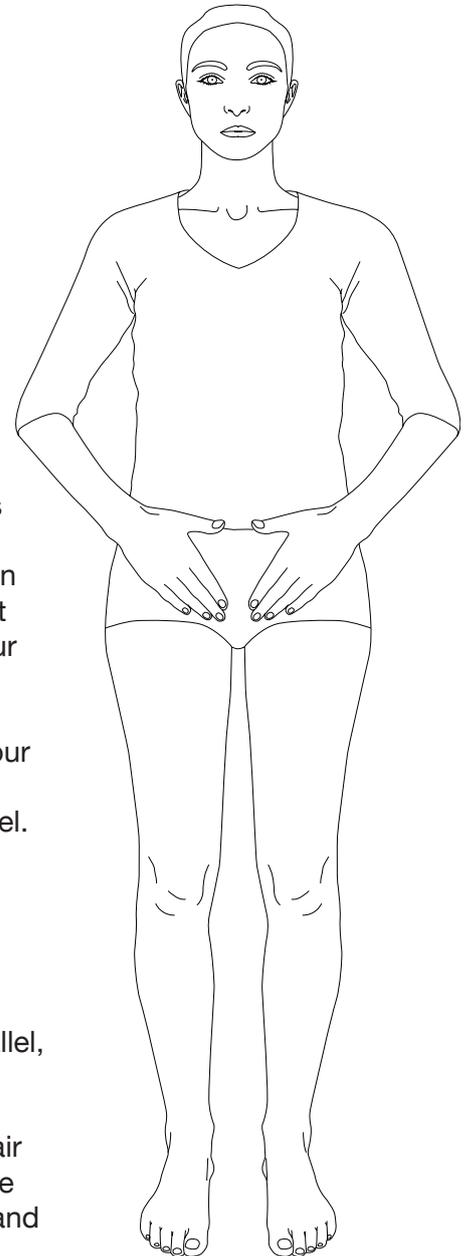
Eyes: look straight ahead.

Shoulders: relaxed and open.

Pelvis: in neutral.
The pubic bone and hip bones are on a level.
Place the heel of your hands on the front of your hips and point your fingers down towards your pubic bone. The pubic bone should not be in front of your hips, or conversely, sticking your bottom out. The hips and the pubic bone should be on a level.

Knees: relaxed.

Feet: hip width apart and parallel, they should line up with your "sit bones" about 6cm (2.5 inches) apart. As with your chair exercises, place equal pressure on big toe joint, little toe joint and centre of heel.



Think of yourself like building blocks.

Your feet are your strong foundation, the hips are directly above your feet, ribs in line with your hips, shoulders stacked on top. Lengthen your neck, imagine you are a tall skyscraper with your head reaching up into the clouds!

Taking a few moments to try and find good alignment is so important when you have been lying down or slumping in a chair most of the day.

Standing up straight is quite an effort and sometimes you may feel a little dizzy. If you do, go back to the sitting exercises.

7. BEND AND RAISE

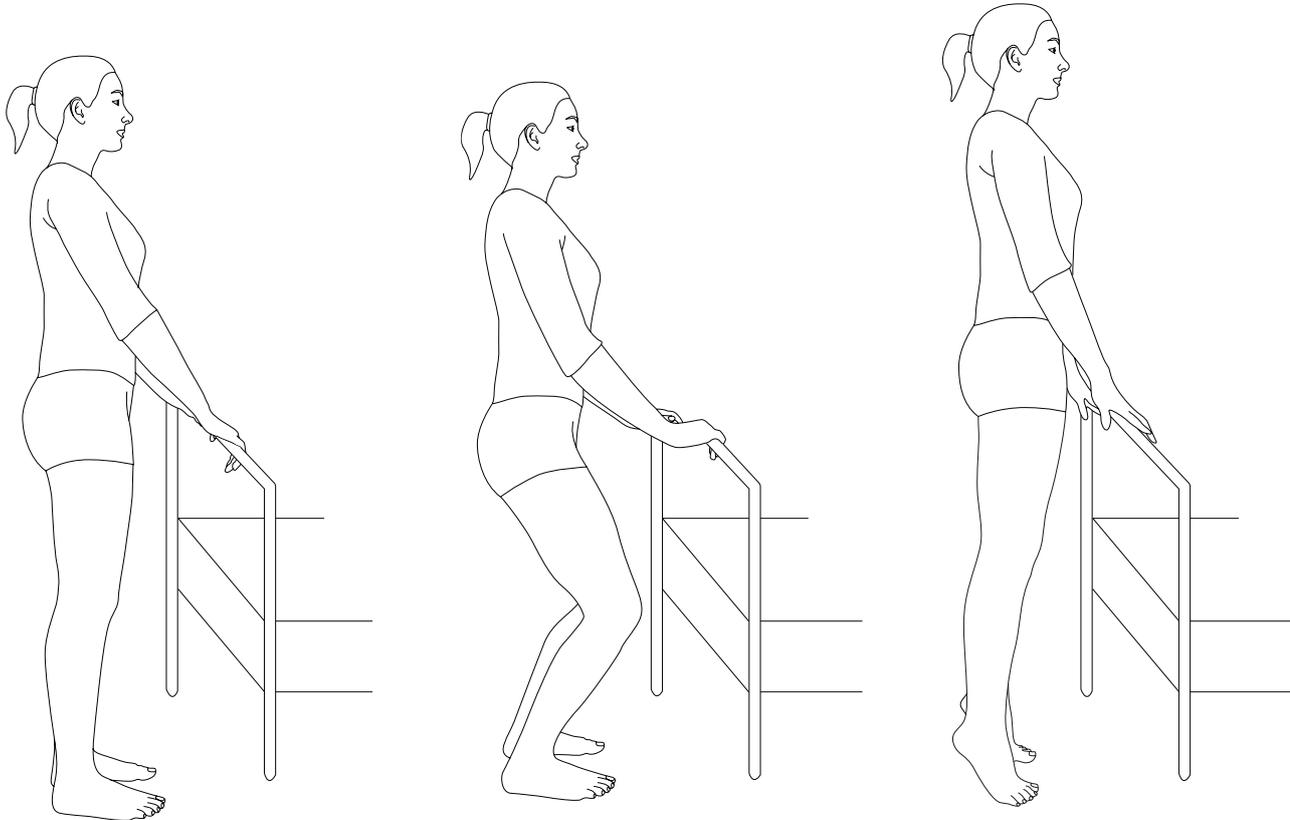
Position

Stand in good alignment.

Place your hands on the bed rail.

Feet are hip width apart and parallel.

Your feet should line up with your “sit bones” about 6cm (2.5 inches) apart.



Action

Breathe in and zip and hollow.

Exhale, bend the knees, keeping heels on the floor.

Inhale, straighten the knees.
Exhale, raise the heels up so you are standing on the balls of your feet.
Inhale, lower the heels back down to the floor.

Duration

Repeat 5 times.

Technique

As you bend your knees keep your pelvis in neutral, as described on page 13.

When you raise your heels, keep equal pressure on the big and little toe joints. Imagine you are trying to hold a tennis ball between your ankles as you lift your heels off the floor.

Keep your knees on a line with the feet as you bend. Do not let the knees roll in (knock knees) or roll out (bow legs).

Why?

This exercise stretches and strengthens the calf and feet muscles. It also strengthens the knee stabilising muscles and helps us with balance.

We need all of these things when we walk. After a transplant, walking is sometimes a bit of an effort and your legs may feel a bit wobbly. So a little practice every day helps to keep our muscles strong and increase our confidence in our bodies.

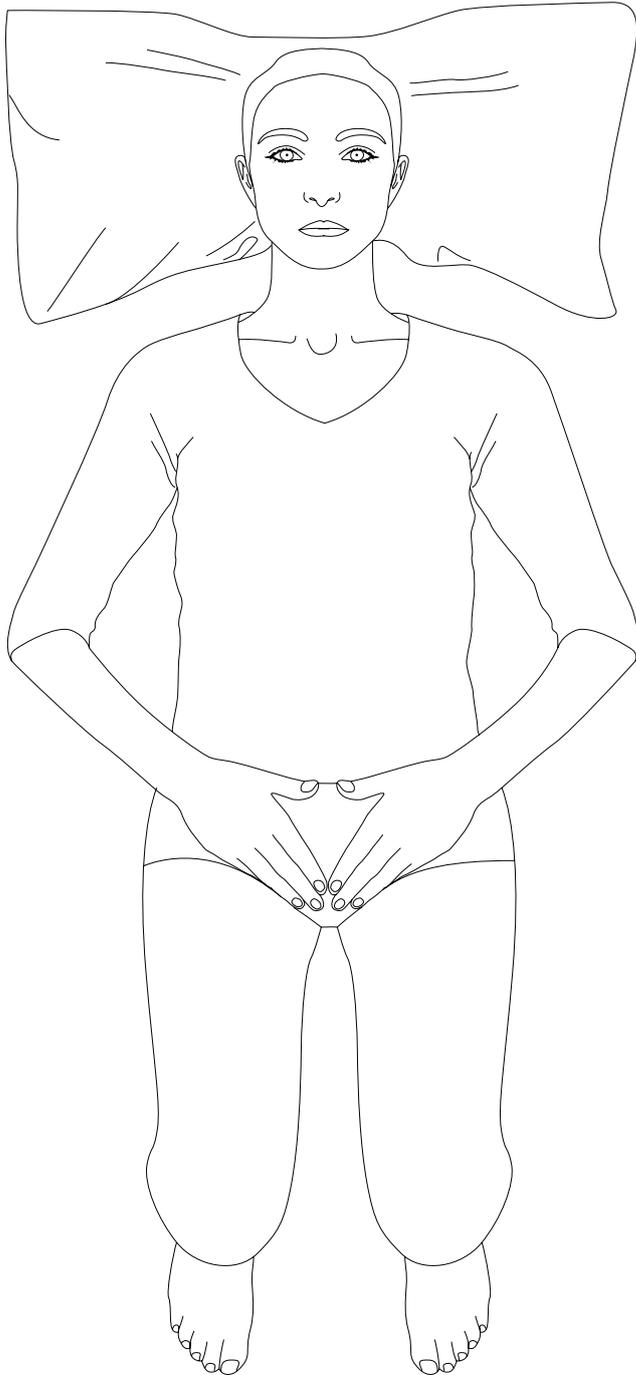
BED EXERCISES

Position

Lie in good alignment on your bed.

Trying to keep “neutral pelvis” on a mattress is difficult. Usually in Pilates classes we lie down on the floor. A hard surface is much easier to feel where our hips are.

In hospital, it is better to lie on our beds as getting up and down from the floor could be difficult if you are feeling weak.



Place one pillow behind your head.

Heels of the hands on your hip bones, fingers pointing to your pubic bone. These should be on a level, the same as when you did your standing alignment.

Knees are bent, feet hip width apart, about 6cm (2.5 inches).

8. HIP FLEXOR STRETCH

Position

Lie in good alignment on your bed.

Place one pillow behind your head.

Knees are bent, feet hip width apart.

Heels of the hands on your hip bones, fingers pointing to your pubic bone. These should be on a level, the same as when you did your standing alignment, see page 13.

Imagine you have a compass on your tummy.

The North will be towards your nose. Think N.N. North=Nose.

The South is towards your tailbone, East your left hip bone and West is your right hip bone.

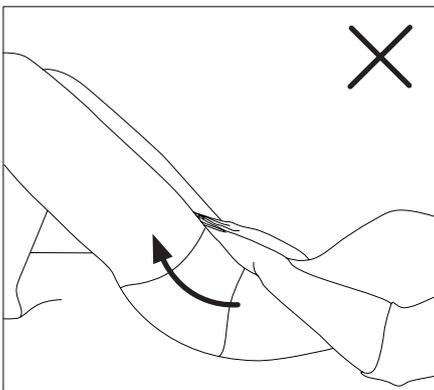
Visualise a spirit-level on your tummy, between your hips and pubic bone. Try to keep all three on the same plane.

Action

Lift one knee into your chest. Place both hands on top of your knee (if you have bad knees, hold behind your thigh so you do not compress your knee).

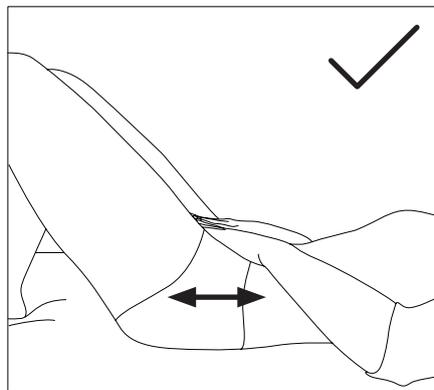
Using your hands, slowly draw your knee into your chest.

Keeping your tailbone on the mattress, slowly slide your free leg along the mattress till the leg is straight.



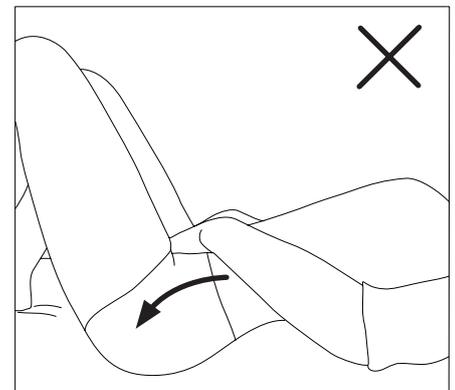
Incorrect pelvic alignment

Pelvis tipped to the North,
lower back pressing into the
mattress.



Correct pelvic alignment

Pelvis in neutral.



Incorrect pelvic alignment

Pelvis tipped to the South,
lower back arched.

If you have to arch your back or tip your pelvis to stretch your leg, it is better to leave it a little bent. Hold this stretch for 5 breaths.

Bring the straight leg back to its starting position, then unfurl your other leg and place it back on the mattress.

Repeat on the other leg

Duration

Repeat 6 times on alternate legs.

Technique

Keep your chin on a level throughout the exercise.

Try to keep your pelvis in “neutral” as you slide your leg out.

Think of stretching your leg away from the top of the thigh and opening out your hip joint.

The foot is relaxed whilst you are holding the stretch.

Practice your slow, deep lateral breathing and feel your body release and relax into your bed.

Yawning is permitted!

Why?

Helps to relax our lower back and maintain good posture when we stand up.

9. LEG SLIDES

Position

Lie in good alignment on your bed.

Place one pillow behind your head.

Knees are bent, feet hip width apart.

Heels of the hands on your hip bones, fingers pointing to your pubic bone. These should be on a level, the same as when you did your standing alignment, see page 13.

Relax elbows on the mattress.



Correct head alignment

Your chin is on a level, your pillow is placed under the head so that your neck is not resting on it.



Incorrect head alignment

Your chin is not on a level, your head is tilted back as the pillow is placed under the neck.

It is harder to do this lying on a mattress than on a solid floor.

When you are out of hospital and at home, you could try this lying on the floor.

Action

Breathe in, lengthen the spine.

Exhale, zip and hollow and slide your leg along the mattress, keeping it in line with your hip.

Breathe in, maintain the position, and think of your spine lengthening along your bed.

Exhale, zip and hollow and draw the leg back to the start position.

Duration

Repeat 6 times alternately.

Technique

Take a deep breath in, and as you exhale, “sigh”.

Notice when you “sigh” how the back of your ribs relax down into the mattress.

Try to keep the ribs relaxed all the way through this exercise.

Imagine you have a pair of braces on, so your ribs stay on a line with your hips.

You do not want to push your ribs down, just be aware you are not allowing them to hitch up.

Why?

Helps to open the muscles at the front of the hips and strengthens lower abdominals.

10. PILLOW SQUEEZE

Position

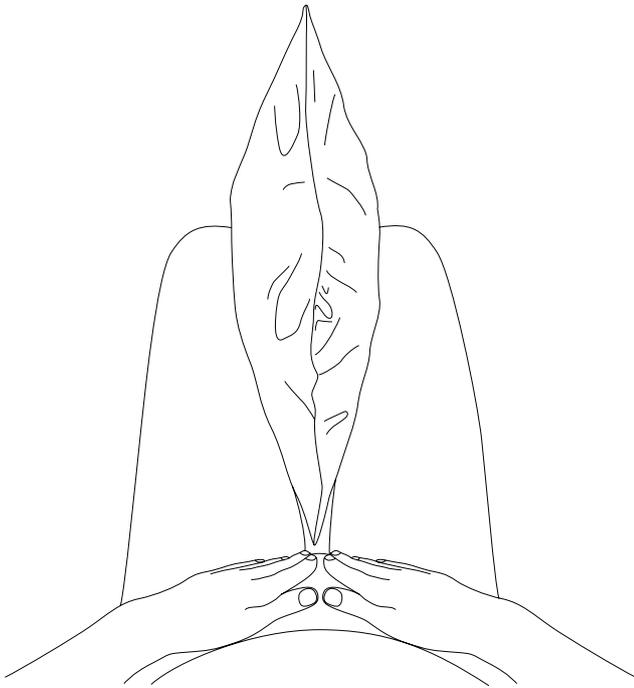
Lie in good alignment on your bed.

Place one pillow behind your head.

Knees are bent, ankles together, place a pillow between your knees.

Heels of the hands on your hip bones, fingers pointing to your pubic bone. These should be on a level, the same as when you did your standing alignment.

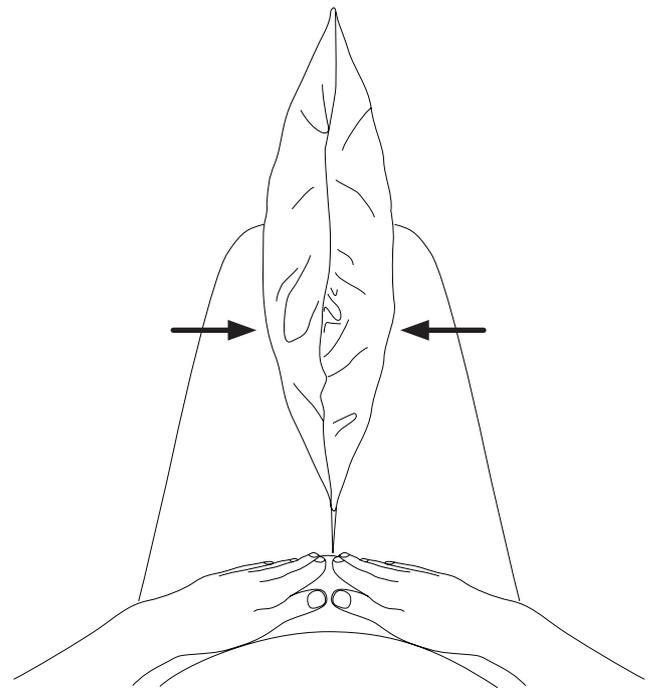
Relax elbows on the mattress.



Action

Inhale to lengthen your spine.

Maintain enough force to keep the pillow between your knees.



Exhale, zip and hollow, squeeze the pillow, using your inner thighs.

Keep squeezing for 3 breaths, then relax the squeeze but keep the pillow between your knees.

Duration

Repeat 5 times.

Technique

When you squeeze the pillow make sure you do not tilt the pelvis up to the North. Keep your pelvis in neutral throughout the whole exercise.

As you are squeezing, also focus on keeping your pelvic floor and navel to spine engaged.

Why?

Our inner thighs may become very weak when immobile. Maintaining strength in these helps us not to be “wobbly” on our legs when we walk.

USEFUL CONTACTS

1. **Carole Barker** – Tel: 01903 882734

If you want to ask any questions about how I coped with my transplant or any of the exercises, please call me.

2. **Carole's Pilates Classes**

For full details of my classes in Arundel, West Sussex visit www.arundelpilates.co.uk

3. **Body Control Pilates Classes**

If you wish to learn Pilates before your transplant, or to keep up the good work, you can find a Body Control® Pilates teacher in your area via the official website www.bodycontrol.co.uk
You can also order DVD's and books, I recommend the Body Control® Pilates Manual.

4. **Spezia Organics**

I found Spezia Organics products really useful for moisturising my body and bald head! You can find their full product list on their website, www.spiezaorganics.com or via telephone, 0870 850 8851

5. **Hats/Scarves etc...**

A good company for hats and scarves etc... is **Headcovers**.
Full product list and prices are available at www.headcovers.com

BIG THANK YOU'S

Back in February 1995, when I was first diagnosed, the two wonderful doctors who had to cope with my temper, despair and fear were Dr. Carmel Coulter and Professor Bain. I was indeed lucky to have two such special people looking after me. Dr. Coulter's calm and kind words and Prof. Bain's forthright and practical nature carried me through those first 10 years. The nursing staff at St. Mary's Paddington soothed all my worries, especially Rebecca Johl and Joan Klein.

In 2005 I was referred to the Hammersmith for my transplant. I thought getting used to a new doctor would be hard, but Dr. Kanfer made it so easy. He is witty, funny, kind and caring. Is he a saint? Almost! Is he a brilliant doctor and healer? Definitely. Thank you also to the terrific nursing staff of Weston Ward, especially Olav Brokka, Eva Chipkoua and Enqjin Tan, and in day care, Andrew Nicol, Kazumi Nakane and the brilliant Janet Gururaj who always gets the needle in first time. All the nursing staff are terrific, but the above, for me, were truly wonderful.

Dr. Alice Greene, Medical and Homeopathic doctor, has helped me through years of treatment. In fact she was the doctor who first diagnosed my NHL when my own GP told me to go away. I thank her for listening to me, caring for me and always knowing the right words to soothe me. Her practical and homeopathic advice has also proved a godsend.

In helping me write this booklet, Vicky-Jade Harmsworth who is also a Body control® Pilates teacher, linguist and medical artist, was invaluable for all the wonderful line drawings and suggestions she made. Email: vickyjade@the-hundred.com

I'm grateful to the Body Control® Pilates Association, especially Lynne Robinson and Gordon Thompson, whose foresight has brought the method of Pilates to a huge market here in the UK, Europe and soon the USA. There is no stopping them!

Thanks also to Fran Wellington for wading through all my scribbles and typing up this booklet. She is also a very good guinea-pig and gives me sound advice.

I'm truly grateful to my dear friend Eileen Tracey for editing my dodgy English!

Thanks to all my fantastic friends who have rallied round and supported me especially my wonderful sister June whose constant support, love and care helped me to get through the difficult times.

And not least, thanks to the Patient Panel at the Hammersmith Hospital that I belong to, where I first thought up the idea for my booklet.

AND! AND! THANKS TO MEDICAL SCIENCE FOR STAYING ONE STEP AHEAD OF MY ILLNESS.