



Kay McLorn MCSP is the Practice Principal of Blackstone Physiotherapy.

# Pilates, Bone Health and Osteoporosis

Kay McLorn from Blackstone Physiotherapy discusses the importance of 'banking bone' when you're young.



Pilates is a safe system of mindful exercises that target the deep postural muscles of the abdomen and spine to improve overall posture and core stability. Exercises are performed either on an exercise mat or on a variety of specialised equipment, most commonly the Pilates Reformer. These exercises can dramatically transform the way your body looks, feels and performs. It is a

sensible and achievable programme that helps you look and feel your best. It teaches body awareness, good posture and promotes easy movement.

Some of the benefits of Pilates include:

- Good posture
- Increased core stability
- Improved flexibility
- Improved muscle tone and strength

- Improved balance
- Improved co-ordination

### What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a condition affecting our bones which makes the inside of bones thinner and less dense, thereby making them more fragile and prone to break after a minor bump or fall. These broken bones may often be referred to as 'fragility fractures'. The wrist, hip and spine are most commonly affected.

According to the National Osteoporosis Society, "One in two women and one in five men over the age of 50 in the UK will fracture a bone, mainly due to poor bone health. The cause of the disease is still not fully understood, but research continues to build up a picture of the factors that influence our bone health."

As children, our bones develop quickly as we grow, increasing in density and strength and although our bones stop growing between the ages of 16 and 18, bone density continues to increase until a person is in their twenties. After about 35 years, the bones then start to lose this density and there is more loss in women for several years after the menopause. Exercising as

children will encourage bone growth and density.

### Get physical!

Our bones stay stronger if you do regular weight bearing exercise. Pilates exercises in standing and mat work will help this, as well as walking briskly, jogging, tennis, dancing, gardening and golf etc. For weight training, Reformer Pilates and using the jump boards is excellent and a fun way to address these issues.

Encourage your children to do Pilates – find out about our children's summer programme at Blackstone Physiotherapy.



### Get some Vitamin D – go for a walk!

Vitamin D is essential in the development of bone – it helps our bodies to absorb that all important calcium for our bone health. Try and get out and take a walk every day to catch the sun as this is our main source of Vitamin D.

### Fall Prevention

Pilates is an excellent way to help with the prevention of falls. The challenging exercises help to develop balance and co-ordination. Pilates in standing programmes are specifically designed to improve the body's ability to maintain stability. Physiotherapy exercises will always help in the prevention of falls.

**Find out about all our Pilates programmes at Blackstone Physiotherapy by contacting the clinic on: 028 9261 1211.**



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