

# Pilates

Version 1 – 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012



## Pregnancy & Pilates - Client Handout

### Scope

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This document is written for clients who are pregnant or who have had a baby within the last 3 months.

#### Contents:

- Safety First
- Warning Signs To Stop Exercise
- Screening/Questionnaire
- Your First Class - What To Expect

# Pregnancy & Pilates – The Serious Bit!

## Safety First

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- **Please ensure your GP/Obstetrician approves of you doing Pilates.**
- This isn't me trying to pass the buck – honest! Although Pilates is safe when the various movement contra-indications are followed, there may be other factors that either your GP / Obstetrician may be aware of.
- Best to have at least checked. Your verbal assurance on this count is fine.

## Warning Signs To Stop Exercise

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- **If you experience any of the following, please don't do Pilates until you have checked with your GP/Obstetrician**
- Vaginal bleeding
- Amniotic fluid leakage
- Unusual shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Headaches
- Chest pain
- Calf pain / swelling

## Screening/Questionnaire

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### Specific Pregnancy Related Questions

- Which Trimester are you in? 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> (or "4<sup>th</sup>"! – ie gave birth within the last 3 months)
- Do you have any children? If so, how many and how old are they?
- Have you had any C – sections? If so, when was the most recent one?
- Have you had any miscarriages? If so, when was the most recent one?
- Are you on IVF?
- Have you had any joint injuries/issues in the past (eg knee/hip/elbow/wrist joint issues)

### General Pilates Screening Questions

Do you have any of the following

- Osteoporosis
- Stenosis

- Spondylolisthesis
- Disc Herniations
- Facet Joint Syndrome
- Hip Joint Replacement
- Hypertension / Glaucoma / Gastric Reflux
- Neurological Conditions (Parkinson's, Muscular Sclerosis)
- Hernia
- Sciatica
- At risk of Lymphedema

# Pregnancy & Pilates – The Fun Stuff!

## Your First Class – What To Expect

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- If you are in your third Trimester, please bring a towel (so we can use this to slightly elevate your right side when lying down)
- You will find Pilates slow, gentle and controlled. The moves are wonderful for your pregnancy due to the focus on Pelvic Floor and Transverse Abs/Obliques – just the muscle groups that you will really be needing! It is so NOT an ab-crunch class
- There are some certain types of moves that you shouldn't do and I will let you know on the day. Some of these are obvious, others not so.
- Me man, you lady! I am always acutely aware of the fact that I will never really have the first IDEA of what it is like to be pregnant and if I say anything that is absurd – you tell me! 😊
- JUST ASK! Even if you are the only person in the class who is pregnant, if you want the air con off/on/off/on – no problem, ask. If you need to continually stop for water, toilet – fine by me. If you need help placing a towel/chi-ball/bolster under your back and then removing it/replacing it/removing it – as many times as you want is ok. You are NOT being 'high maintenance', you are being SENSIBLE and listening to your body.
- Most of the Pilates moves can be tailored extensively – ie regressed and extended. I can typically give the same move to a class with people of varied abilities. However, there may be a few moves you will have to either 'sit out' or I can give an alternative so you don't feel like you are sitting 'alone in the naughty corner'.
- Remember, 'Today You' is not necessarily the same as 'Yesterday You'! Don't stress if you can't perform a move as well as a previous class. Bottom line – aim not to finish exhausted – this is especially pertinent when you are pregnant!
- I rarely use a stage (even where there is one), preferring instead to be at the same level as my clients. I always aim for a mix of about one third demonstrating and two thirds walking around

observing/correcting while talking you through the moves. I typically play 'chillout/background' music VERY quietly and rarely use a microphone.