The Benefits of Pilates

by Wainani Arnold, Pilates Instructor

oseph Pilates truly was ahead of his time with his holistic approach to exercise.

"Contrology [now called 'Pilates'] is designed to give you suppleness, natural grace and skill that will be unmistakably reflected in the way you walk, in the way you play and in the way you work," Pilates said. "You will develop muscular power with corresponding endurance, ability to perform arduous duties, to play strenuous games, to walk, run or travel for long distances without undue body fatigue or mental strain."

Students say that Pilates "woke up muscles I never knew I had." "I feel relaxed yet energized." "I now have better posture and little to no pain."

Pilates is founded on the principals of breath, centering, precision, concentration, flow and control. A Pilates routine inherently moves the practitioner mindfully through different planes and ranges of motion, which is essential in stimulating the body and mind. Although there are classical exercises that are quintessential to Pilates, there are limitless variations. It doesn't matter your age, gender, physicality — anyone can do it.

BENEFITS OF PILATES

- **Balance & Coordination**: Better equilibrium, steadiness, confidence and overall balance.
- **Strength & Stamina**: Improves muscle and skeletal strength and endurance.
- **Flexibility & Mobility**: Improves muscular flexibility and joint health.
- Improves Circulation & Detoxification:
 Activates the lungs and pumps the heart to move



(L–R) Elvira Lee, Tom Glass, George and Grace Lee work on optimal posture, balance and coordination.

debris out of the body via the bloodstream.

- **Mental Health**: Clears the mind and promotes better brain function.
- **Resilience**: Strengthens the nervous system, which increases resilience to daily stressors.
- **Vibrancy**: Promotes better sleep, which builds energy and the immune system.
- **Self-Care**: Teaches *how* to care for yourself and inspires you to *want* to take care of yourself.
- Inspires: Staying active and improving diet.
- Pain-Free: Reduces or removes physical pain.
- Accessible: Pilates mat exercises and techniques are with you wherever you go. A Pilates routine can be enhanced by props and equipment, but they are not required.

Pilates will meet you where you are at today so you can enjoy all that life has to offer. ■

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Using Light to Improve Brain Health

by Kathy K. Sato, Licensed Acupuncturist

ne would expect that an effective treatment for Alzheimer's disease (AD) would be pharmacological. And yet, 99 percent of AD drug trials fail. The last time the FDA approved an AD drug was 2003.

Acupuncturists might focus on neuroregeneration using neuroacupuncture. In a similar fashion, a new modality—photobiomodulation (PBM)—has been building its case as a credible treatment alternative for AD. Rather than targeting a single biological mechanism, it helps the brain repair itself.

Photobiomodulation uses near-infrared light to stimulate, heal, regenerate and protect brain cells and tissues that have been injured, are degenerating or are at risk of dying. A high-quality PBM device sends photons of light through the skull, stimulating brain cells to increase metabolic energy, and increase cerebral blood flow and neuroconnectivity.

Many studies have used photobiomodulation for cognitive decline and dementia/AD. Currently, there is a large clinical trial being run at eight

sites across North America.

Using light is easy. It's noninvasive and unlike medication, it is able to affect multiple neural pathways, which may make it an elegant solution to a very complex problem.

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