

Program name: Low Back Pain - Intermediate Program

Program date: 11/03/2020

The Pilates Rest Position

In the rest position your muscles are relaxed and your joints are in neutral alignment. You should try to incorporate the key points of the rest position into all postures throughout your day.

- Lie on your back with your knees bent up and your head supported on a small cushion or folded towel
- Relax the weight of your head into the support
- Lengthen the back of the neck by reaching the crown of the head towards the wall behind you
- Gently draw your shoulder blades down towards your waist to relax the neck and shoulders
- Soften the ribcage into the mat to connect the back of the ribcage on the mat
- Place your feet and knees hip distance apart
- Make sure that your weight rests on the six key points of the feet: the base of each big toes, each little toe and the centre of the heel on each foot
- Imagine your pelvis is a bucket of water. Tip it backwards to spill some water out the back of the bucket and you will feel your back gently flatten onto the mat. Now tip it forwards to spill some water out of the front of the bucket and you will feel your lower back arch slightly. Find your 'neutral spine' position by resting the bucket halfway between these two movements. There should be a small space between your back and the mat, and your pubic and hip bones should form a small flat triangle
- Maintaining the neutral spine position, INHALE wide into the sides and back of the ribcage and then EXHALE. At the end of your exhale, slowly draw up through the pelvic floor muscles to engage these and your deep abdominal muscles. Hold this gently contraction and keep breathing for up to ten breaths



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Hundreds

Starting position: Rest position.

Level 1

- INHALE to prepare
- EXHALE and engage your centre, maintaining neutral alignment
- Keep centered and focus on ten breath cycles

Sets: 1 Reps: 10



Level 2

- INHALE to prepare
- EXHALE, float your right knee over your right hip to assume the 'tabletop' leg position
- Hold this tabletop position and focus on five breath cycles
- On fifth breath out, lower your leg to resume the rest position
- Repeat on your opposite leg

Sets: 1 Reps: 10



Clam

Level 1

Starting position: Side lying. Underneath arm outstretched in alignment with the trunk with your head resting on this arm. Hips bent up to approx. 45° and knees bent up to approx. 90°. Shoulders and hips stacked. Top hand resting on the floor. Draw the top hip downwards away from the top shoulder to create a small space between your waist and the mat.

Action

- INHALE to prepare
- EXHALE, lift the top knee upwards keeping the feet together
- INHALE, lower the top knee onto the bottom leg

Sets: 1 Reps: 10



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Clam

Level 2

Starting position: Align the body as for level one. Then lift both feet into the air approx. 8 inches, keeping them stacked.



Action

- INHALE to prepare
- EXHALE, lift the top knee upwards, keeping the feet together and lifted off the mat
- INHALE, lower the top knee onto the bottom leg, keeping the feet lifted off the mat

Sets: 1 Reps: 10

One leg Stretch

Starting position: Rest position. Centre engaged.

Level 1

- INHALE to prepare
- EXHALE, slide your left heel forwards along the floor
- INHALE, slide your left heel back along the floor
- Repeat alternating legs

Sets: 1 Reps: 10



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One leg Stretch

Level 2

- INHALE to prepare
 - EXHALE, float your left leg into tabletop
 - INHALE and hold the tabletop position
 - EXHALE, reach your left leg forwards and upwards on a diagonal line
 - INHALE, fold this leg back into the tabletop position
 - EXHALE, lower your leg to the mat
 - Repeat alternating legs
- Sets: 1 Reps: 10**



Tips

- Imagine that the extending leg is reaching forwards to touch a button on the wall in front of the body
- Imagine that the back of your pelvis is stuck in a block of cement to prevent it swinging it sideways
- When in the abdo. prep. position, keep your eyes focused on your knees

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Scissors

Starting position: Rest position. Centre engaged.

Level 2

- Float your legs one at a time into the tabletop position
 - INHALE and hold this double tabletop position
 - EXHALE, lower your left leg and tap the tips of your toes on the mat
 - INHALE and float this leg back into tabletop
 - EXHALE, lower your right leg and tap the tips of your toes on the mat
 - INHALE and float this leg back into tabletop
 - Repeat alternating legs
- Sets: 1 Reps: 10**



Tips

- Imagine balancing a drinks tray on the front of your pelvis to avoid rocking it sideways
- Do not allow the abdominal wall to bulge or dome forwards
- Imagine that the pelvis is stuck in a block of cement to avoid swinging the pelvis sideways

Shoulder bridge

Starting position: Rest position. Centre engaged.

Level 1

- INHALE to prepare
 - EXHALE, gently roll your lower back into mat, scoop your tailbone upwards and continue to peel your spine off the mat, bone by bone until you are resting on your shoulder blades
 - INHALE and hold the shoulder bridge position
 - EXHALE, lower the shoulder bridge by lowering one bone at a time to the mat, beginning with the highest vertebrae of your bridge and finishing with your tailbone to return to neutral position.
- Sets: 1 Reps: 10**



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Shoulder bridge

Level 2

- INHALE to prepare
- EXHALE and roll into the shoulder bridge position.
- INHALE and hold the shoulder bridge position
- EXHALE, lift and then lengthen your left leg forwards, reaching for the wall in front of you
- INHALE and fold this leg back to the mat to resume the shoulder bridge position
- EXHALE and lower the shoulder bridge.
- Repeat alternating legs and allowing your spine to return to the mat in between shoulder bridges

Sets: 1 Reps: 10



Tips

- Imagine the spine is a string of pearls and you are lifting this string of pearls off the mat pearl by pearl
- Your hips should always be higher than your ribcage in the bridge position
- Keep your collarbones wide and the back of your neck long through out
- Imagine a harness suspended from the ceiling lifting and supporting the pelvis in the bridge

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Swimming

Starting position: Lie on your front. Forehead resting on the back of the hands. Neck long. Glide your shoulder blades down towards your waist. Neutral spine position. Legs in parallel alignment.



Level 3

- INHALE to prepare
- EXHALE, reach your left arm and left leg away from your body, allowing them to hover one inch off the mat
- INHALE and lower this arm and leg to the mat
- Repeat alternating the opposite arm with leg

Sets: 1 Reps: 10



Tips

- Imagine balancing a drinks tray on your lower back to avoid rocking sideways
- Imagine reaching through the arms and legs to reach the wall at either ends of you