

PILATES FOR DANCERS

Shows like "So you think you can dance?" demonstrate just how much physical work, strength, endurance, coordination, balance, power, flexibility and more is required to dance effortlessly. Dancing is a sport. And like with any sport training is required, not just in the sport itself but also outside the sport, cross training including strength, stability and flexibility training.

Possible injuries from dancing:

- Muscle strains from sudden movement without properly warming up.
- Ankle or knee sprains.
- Complicated dance steps may aggravate chronic knee, lower back or ankle injuries.

Primary muscles used:

- **Lower body:** quadriceps, calves, hip abductors (outer thighs), hip adductors (inner thighs), abdominals,
- **Upper body:** shoulders, upper back, arms
- **Abdominals**

Areas of fitness developed when dancing:

- Cardiovascular
- Flexibility
- Muscular strength
- Muscular endurance
- coordination
- weight loss
- Balance
- coordination



Side leg splits on the reformer. Strengthens gluteus medius. Not all Pilates exercises are done lying down.

How can Pilates help?

Pilates is an overall body workout. While the goals for people who take Pilates are varied, through Pilates areas such as posture, breathing and overall ease and efficiency of movement will always be the ultimate goals in your Pilates training. Pilates work on the reformer in particular is good for muscle toning upper body, arms and legs. There is a lot of work that may be done to strengthen the muscles in the legs. While dancing you're always on your feet so strengthening muscles and keeping them toned and in good condition will help prevent injuries.

There is a lot of 'core' strengthening and stabilizing in Pilates. This means strengthening the abdominals and back muscles, as well as the muscles around the pelvis. Being able to keep this area stable while dancing and holding your posture, will help allow for more efficient and freedom of movement in the legs. Matwork is great for conditioning the core and adding some reformer work helps add a dynamic aspect to that core conditioning now you must use the core muscles to stabilize your body on a moving surface.

Many of the other aspects of fitness are also addressed through Pilates, flexibility, coordination, power (jumpboard work is good for power and plyometric exercise), balance, muscular endurance and strength. The low impact nature of Pilates means less stress on joints such as the knees.

To find out more how Pilates and Pilates Patio can help you improve your dancing performance, please contact us at 613-422-3638 or lani@pilatespatio.com



Oblique work. Exercises may be done sitting on the reformer both up on a box or crossed legged.



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