

February 2024

6 Reasons to Start Pilates at Any Age

Exercise can ease your back pain and strengthen your bones, and getting started is easier than you think.

Pilates is an excellent choice for those looking to begin a safe, effective and fun workout. Even if you aren't in the habit of exercising, it's never too late to start. Pilates is possible at any age and may help prevent and improve joint health.

Pilates is a mind-body, low-impact exercise focusing on core muscles while improving flexibility, balance, coordination and overall strength.

A 2022 systematic review of Pilates among older adults detailed the benefits, which included building lower limb strength, increasing trunk stability, preventing falls, improving sleep and helping emotional well-being.

Here are six reasons Pilates can improve your health and wellness regardless of age, plus three tips on



getting started.

1. Better back

Back pain occurs in people of all ages but can cause more significant problems as we age. Pilates helps relieve back pain through core strengthening, increased flexibility and improved posture and spinal alignment.

As a mind-body exercise, Pilates increases your core strength, posture

and balance. Before beginning Pilates, you might go through your day without much thought to how you sit, stand and move, only to have aches and pains at bedtime. Pilates helps increase your body awareness, so you're more likely to notice yourself slouching when tired and can self-correct. This can go a long way in helping to reduce chronic back pain.

Your posture can also improve

respiratory function, digestion and blood circulation. Postural training through Pilates may lower your risk of herniated discs and falls. This leads

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From the Director

The first thing I want to do is thank all the generous donors that made a contribution during our year fund raising campaign. Despite the fact that inflation is eating into everyone's discretionary income, our donors opened their hearts and wallets. We exceeded our goal and thank each of you very much. Even though the campaign is officially ended, if you had intended to give and, for whatever reason, didn't get it done, you can still make a donation, either on our web site or through the mail. If, for whatever reason, you will not be making a donation, please consider volunteering. The older population is growing driving an ever increasing workload. A donation of your time and effort are as valuable as money.

Looking into 2024, we have several exciting events and programs scheduled for the new year. We will once again put on the Walk Run in the early spring, our ___ Dinner Auction in early summer and the 9th Annual Friends in Action Golf Tournament in September. There will be a lot more information coming out

on these events. Watch your mail and e-mail and keep an eye on our website (<https://friendsinactionellsworth.org>).

Our first event of 2024 was the convening of the Ellsworth Hysterical Society which was arranged in collaboration with the Ellsworth Historical Society. The event was well attended and all were entertained with anecdotes from long term, and some not so long term, residents of Ellsworth. Continuing the collaboration with the Historical Society is the upcoming Mock Murder Trial of Dr. Moses Adams. UDr. Adams was accused of killing his wife on May 12, 1815. We will convene on February 24th and see what a modern jury decides.

On the fitness front, we are undertaking a dramatic expansion of the fitness facility and the addition of more fitness classes. Our plan is to create a fitness studio for yoga, mat pilates, and similar fitness classes. The exercise equipment will remain in the current room and we will add new equipment making the facility

more conducive to individual workouts and expand the possibilities for the on-going classes designed for those facing Parkinson's Disease and similar neuro-muscular challenges. Upon completion, we will have two rooms dedicated to fitness activities. We also plan to add three additional classes, Seated Yoga 1, Strength and Body Toning, and Yoga I. Those classes will be published in the schedule when we get closer to completion.

As I have mentioned in previous Connections, we are working hard to increase our capacity to provide services, principally transportation services in the Blue Hill, Stonington, Deer Isle area as well as the further Downeast part of the County. To accomplish this, we are seeking additional collaborations similar to the very successful work with Healthy Peninsula. Under the Healthy Peninsula model, Healthy Peninsula volunteers who wish to provide transportation services for neighbors in the Blue Hill area registered with Friends in Action and provide transportation under the governance of Friends in



Action. The neighbor needing transportation is also registered as a Client with Friends in Action. In this model Friends in Action qualifies the driver and client, develops and maintains and provides necessary driver training, and maintains records including training, licensing, insurance, etc. Each ride is also entered into Friends in Action's transportation management system thus keeping track of details including origin, destination, time and contact information. Healthy Peninsula is relieved of the

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Director's Letter Cont.

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administrative burden and more drivers become more available.

We have entered into a collaboration with Hannaford and Healthy Acadia to present a nutrition program to our clients. Initially, Amy Henderson, the Hannaford nutritionist, will be making presentations/discussions to patrons of our lunch program every second Tuesday. This stage of the program has been very well received and we are working on adding separate classes that will include nutritional instructions and cooking demonstrations.

Another program in its infancy is to work with the Downeast Family Y to develop a cross generational

project to rebuild our current raised garden beds and grow vegetables to be cooked and served at lunch for both the Seniors and the children in the DEFY Day Care. The concept includes teaching the children in the day care center where their food comes from and teach them how to grow it, all under the mentorship of interested older Friends in Action participants. Conceptually, the program might include the Master Gardeners. It is very early days and the first step is to find the money to rebuild the beds.

There is more to write about but I will save it for next time.

-John

Pilates Cont.

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us to our second reason for rolling out your Pilates mat.

2. Balance and fall prevention

Most falls happen either early or later in life. Nearly 39,000 older people died from falls from 2020 to 2021, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — that's more than 100 deaths a day. Pilates can lower the risk of falls, especially as we age.

Though Pilates is often done lying down, several standing exercises emphasize building lower body strength, coordination and balance. Every movement in Pilates focuses on core strength and stability. This combination helps you not only stay balanced, it enables you to catch yourself before a fall happens.

3. Bone health

Maintaining bone health helps you prevent breaks, often triggered by falling. Women in perimenopause and menopause experience fluctuations and drops in estrogen. These hormonal shifts reduce bone tissue growth, potentially leading to lower bone density.

A 2015 study of women diagnosed with osteoporosis found increased bone density in postmenopausal women who practiced Pilates for one hour, three times a week for six months. The women in the study who didn't do Pilates continued to experience bone tissue loss. All the women had not exercised for at least six months before the research began.

The study, published in the Journal of Back and Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation, found that Pilates is a safe, low-impact workout that provides strength training for bone health and bone tissue growth. If lack of exercise experience or a recent diagnosis is holding you back, it's safe to say there is still hope for strong bones with Pilates. (Although it is always recommended that you check with your doctor before beginning any exercise regime, especially if you

have health issues.)

4. Joint health

You won't find intense jumping or heavy weightlifting in Pilates, a low-impact exercise. Instead, building strength through spring resistance and your body weight can help keep your joints safe and build muscle to support your joints. Pilates exercises are developed to stretch and strengthen your body simultaneously. The increased mobility and flexibility you'll gain will help reduce stiff joints.

5. Muscular strength

Pilates builds lean muscle mass without excessively heavy weights. Traditional Pilates apparatus, including the reformer and Cadillac, use springs of varying tension levels. You'll use your body weight on the apparatus and the mat to build strength and stability.

Pilates classes often use smaller props such as light hand weights, a foam roller and the magic circle. These can be used in various exercises to challenge your strength and coordination. You can even do Pilates in your own home with just a mat or towel.

6. More energy

Joseph Pilates, the founder of the method, said, "When all your muscles are properly developed, you will, as a matter of course, perform your work with minimum effort and maximum pleasure."

The strength you gain in Pilates increases your stamina for daily routines. Pilates is a low-impact exercise; however, a study published in the Journal of Clinical Medicine found it to be effective at improving the ability of the circulatory and respiratory system to supply oxygen for energy production. With consistent practice, your body will increase energy production during and after your Pilates sessions.

Joseph Pilates said, "Every moment of our life can be the beginning of great things." Remember it's never too late to start something new, especially something that can help your health.

Volunteer of the Month

Dianne Carter will tell you she likes to keep busy and loves to volunteer. She spends time at the local hospital as well as with Friends in Action food service. Dianne was employed at the hospital for many years. Now, after retirement, she dedicates her skills and time at Friends in Action every week.

She and her husband used to come to the lunches at the Senior Center. Since his passing, Dianne comes as a volunteer. She

stresses that it takes away the loneliness to be with good people who are so appreciative of her service. Every Thursday, at 11am you will find her in the Friends in Action café, preparing to serve 30 to 40 diners. Dianne enjoys all the friendly folks and always has a smile on her face as she serves lunch and then stays until about 1:00 to help with cleanup. Ask her and she'll tell you, "Friends in Action is a good place to be."



Participant of the Month



Sandy Loudner has been coming to Friends in Action Coffee Hours and Lunches for nearly 10 years. She started coming to find friends to relieve the terrible loneliness after she lost her husband. The group used to play board games and cribbage after the weekly lunches. She also started attending art classes where she found another group of welcoming people.

Sandy describes the comradery as fantastic! The meals are good and, "The dessert is always a surprise!. Plus, I don't have to cook." Her children went to school at the Moore Center. She's so glad to see the building still being used.

SCHERZO \skertsō\

1: an EDMI Adult Chorus for ages 50+

2: a vigorous, light, or playful composition

The Adult (Age 50+) Chorus is beginning a new season on February 6, 2024

Rehearsals will be held in The Moore Community Center Theater, 125 State Street, Ellsworth, on Tuesdays 11am-12pm for 12 weeks.

Deadline for Registration is February 2, 2024.

Class Fee is \$130 for full season or 4 payments of \$32.50.

Scholarships funding available upon request

The Friends in Action Food Drive Continues. Drop off non-perishable food items in the Friends in Action office at 5 General Moore Way, Ellsworth.

Lunch Participants Go Home with Nutrition Tips and More

Healthy Acadia and Hannaford are sponsoring Amy Henderson's community outreach on nutrition. Amy is a licensed and registered dietician. Her primary goal is to inform/remind seniors of ways to maintain a healthy diet

On January 9th, Amy Henderson stopped in during lunch being in the Friends in Action Cafe and shared information about easy ways to improve food choices when shopping locally. Participants happily went home with grocery coupons and a water bottle. Take-home advice was pretty simple, drink lots of water to stay hydrated this winter and use the coupons to buy healthier items which Hannaford marks with a "Guiding Star" in the Hannaford stores. "Guiding Stars" are displayed on the shelf tags below the items.

Amy went into private practice a year ago and began working as a nu-

trition consultant with Hannaford. In her own practice she can consult one-on-one as well as making group presentations to include on-line classes. You can call the store to make an appointment to meet with their dietician. Once there, time and workload permitting, Amy may even join you as you shop.

For more food tips, Amy will be visiting the Friends in Action lunch every second Tuesday. Also, watch for details about the "Cooking Matters" program that is going to take place at the Friends in Action Senior Center soon. You'll want to participate in these cooking classes sponsored in collaboration with Healthy Acadia and Hannaford. Nutritionists Isadora Munoz and Amy Henderson will be presenting a 6 week class which will include hands on meal preparation. It will be informative and fun.

- Everybody Eats! Dunstan's Church, 973-287-9926
- Friends in Action Senior Center 207- 664-6016
- Franklin Veterans' Club Friday Meal 207-565-2977

- Downeast Table a Plenty 207-546-4466
- The Welcome Table, First Congregational Church, 207-667-8321
- Simmering Pot Blue Hill Cong Church 207-374-3257

What is a Donation After All?

The Friends in Action Annual Appeal is nearly over and looks like a great success. It's that time of year to reach out to our community for support. We hope past members and new will be finding ways to donate. If you're trying to decide how much you want to give, you might be forgetting that there are many ways to give. A monetary donation is not the only way to make a big impact. Friends in Action depends on money to keep our programs alive, but the gift of a person's time, energy and skill is also appreciated.

Whether from a bank account or someone's heart, this organization cannot carry on without the gift of giving. An in-kind donation could

involve office work, volunteering to transport our clients, helping to serve lunch. But volunteers can teach a class like one on how to use your new cell phone, help organize a special event like a food drive, or be a sponsor for fundraising events like the Friends in Action Golf Tournament. If you decide to sign up as a volunteer, please know you'll be welcomed as you become part of the team that carries out the mission of Friend in Action. Whatever your donation, give generously, give often! If you're thinking about writing a check, please do so and know your gift will be put to good work and be greatly appreciated.

Fighting Food Insecurity In Hancock County

Strong community partnerships are working to eliminate hunger in Maine. There are numerous opportunities to access nutritious food for people in need. The Good Shepherd Food Bank has 600 plus organizations through their food donation programs throughout the state. For more information go to foodpantries.org Listed

here are locations in Hancock County that have food pantries.

Meals are also available in our area. Call to check on schedule and cost if any. Some ask for reservations. Most are volunteer coordinated programs whose goal it is to provide healthy, wholesome food in a warm, hospitable and stress-free environment.

- Emmaus Center Food Pantry 51 Main St. Ellsworth 207-667-3962
- Everybody Eats 134 Main St. Ellsworth 207-664-3568
- Loaves and Fishes 137 Downeast Highway 207-667-4363
- Bucksport Community Concerns Elm Street Cong. Church 207-469-2400
- Bar Harbor Food Pantry 36 Mt. Desert St. 207-288-3375
- Island Food Pantry Deer Isle 207-348-6181
- Life Line Ministries Food. Pantry Gouldsboro 207-963-7972
- Tree of Life Food Pantry Blue Hill 207-374-2900
- H.O.M.E. Co-Op Food Pantry Orland 207-469-7961
- What's for Suppa Food Pantry Otis Baptist Church 207-537-5950

MENU

February 2024

<p>Thursday, February 1st Meatball Subs, Salad, Veggies and Fruit</p>	<p>Thursday, February 8th Beef Stroganoff, Roll, Veggies and Fruit</p>	<p>Thursday, February 15th Chicken Pot Pie, Roll Veggies and Fruit</p>	<p>Thursday, February 22nd Fish Sandwich, Tater Tots, Veggies and Fruit</p>	<p>Thursday, February 29th Beef and Bean Burritos, Rice, Veggies and Fruit</p>
<p>Tuesday, February 6th Lasagna, Mozzarella Bread Stick, Veggies and Fruit</p>	<p>Tuesday, February 13th Meatloaf, Roll, Veggies and Fruit</p>	<p>Tuesday, February 20th Orange Chicken, Fried Rice, Veggies and Fruit <i>Amy Henderson will drop in to lead a talk on nutrition</i></p>	<p>Tuesday, February 27th Wicked Chicken Pasta, Roll, Veggies and Fruit</p>	<p>Weekly desserts to be announced at Lunch! Please call 664-6016 before 5:00 on Monday & Wednesday to reserve lunch for Tuesday & Thursday.</p>



DR. MOSES ADAMS, HIGH SHERIFF OF HANCOCK COUNTY, WAS ACCUSED OF THE BRUTAL MURDER OF HIS OWN WIFE IN 1815.
WAS HE INNOCENT OR GUILTY?



MOCK MURDER TRIAL



Friends in Action



ELLSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH @ 10AM IN THE MOORE CENTER AUDITORIUM - OUR OWN MOCK TRIAL OF THIS INFAMOUS CASE!
ELLSWORTHISTORY.ORG/EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE JURY AND TRIAL!

