

# ♥ YOUR JOINTS



## Workout

### Exercise to keep your joints in tip top condition

Even the most gentle of exercises can help maintain joint health.

That's why we asked Pilates Consultant and Physiotherapist, Beverly Skull, to come up with a range of exercises aimed at keeping healthy joints mobile.

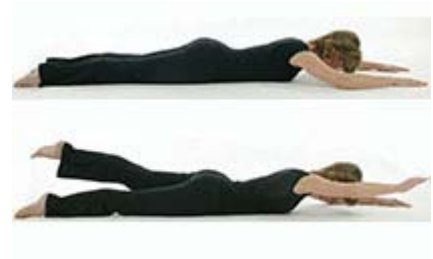
You'll be pleased to hear that the exercises are easy to follow and can be carried out in the comfort and privacy of your own home. You should begin by getting your start position right (below).

Please consult your GP before embarking on any new exercise regime.



### STARTING POSITION

1. Lying on your back with head supported if necessary
2. Knees bent, feet flat on floor
3. Upper 2/3 back on floor, lower 1/3 gap for hand
4. Legs hip width apart
5. Relax body onto floor
6. Hold tummy back on a partial contraction
7. This produces a neutral alignment



### 5. Swimming

- a) Lying on your front, arms lengthened in front of you. Forehead supported on folded towel. Elbows soft. Legs in parallel (pillow may be required under lower back). Lift one arm, keeping body still then lower arm down. Repeat 5 to 10 times with each arm.
- b) Position as for a) but forehead resting on back of both hands. Lift one leg, keep body and head still, and lower. Repeat 5 to 10 times with each leg.
- c) Position as for a) lift opposite arm and leg 2-3 inches off floor, again keeping head and body still and then lower. Repeat 5 to 10 times each diagonal.



### 1. Scissor Arms

Lying on back (starting position). Arms lengthened to ceiling, palms facing forwards. Take one arm above head resting at the side of the face and the other arm down to the side of the body.

Bring arms up to vertical. Change over and repeat 10 times.

Progression: use hand weights eg 500g.



### 2. Single Leg Stretch

Lying on back (starting position). Bend one leg to 90 degrees then lengthen leg forwards to an angle of 45 degrees. Bring leg back to 90 degrees and lower leg down again.

Repeat sequence 5 to 10 times alternating legs.

Progression: Start with both legs up to 90 degrees, then lengthen one leg to angle of 45 degrees; bring leg back to 90 degrees.



### 6. Onto Toes

Standing with feet hip width apart. Arms by side. Throughout lengthen up through spine. Bend knees, keeping heels on the floor. Straighten knees and then come up onto toes then lower heels. Repeat sequence 5 to 10 times.



### 7. Floating Arms

Standing with feet hip width apart. Arms by side. Palms facing inwards. Raise arms out to side to shoulder height - now with palms facing forwards. Do not raise shoulders. Then slowly lower arms to side again. Repeat sequence 5 to 10 times.



### 3. Double Arm Stretch with lengthening out legs

Lying on back (starting position). Both arms lengthened to ceiling, palms facing forwards; bend one leg to 90 degrees.

Take both arms overhead and, keeping the leg bent to 90 degrees still throughout. Circle arms back to starting position. Repeat sequence 5 to 10 times with each leg.  
**Progression:** Work arms as before but lengthen leg to angle of 45 degrees when taking arms overhead and bring leg back when circling arms back.



### 4. Open / Close Upper Body

Lying on side, arms lengthened in front of you with palms facing each other. Head supported, knees bent towards you.

Take upper arm up to ceiling and then take arm behind you, letting your head follow your hand. Hold stretch and then bring arm back. Repeat sequence 5 to 10 times each side.

**Progression:** Take upper arm above head then behind you, over your hip and back to where you started. Repeat 5 to 10 times.



### 8. Shoulder Bridge

Lying on back (starting position). Slowly, carefully, start to "peel" the base of the spine off the floor. Hold and then lower down gradually. Lift more of the spine off the floor until there is a diagonal from knees to shoulders. Hold this position and then slowly and carefully lower the back onto the floor - "bone by bone". Repeat sequence 5 to 10 times.

**Progression:** When able to come up onto your shoulders comfortably, bring both arms up to vertical, keep them there, roll down, then take arms above head and circle arms out to side and back into side.



### 9. Hip Twist

Lying on back (starting position). Take both knees to one side, keeping the upper body on the mat. Bring both knees back to the centre. Take knees to the other side. Repeat 5 to 10 times each side.

**Progression:** lengthen both arms out to side, palms facing up. Take both knees to one side, turning head to opposite side, turning palm down the way you are facing, and then bring knees back to centre at the same time bringing head back to the centre, turning the palm up. Repeat sequence 5 to 10 times each side.



#### 10. Rest Position

Bottom down onto your heels, knees apart, toes together. Arms lengthened in front of you, bringing your thumbs together if you are comfortable. Hold the stretch for 10-15 seconds.

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