



Pilates for Fragile Backs: Recovering Strength and Flexibility After Surgery, Injury, or Other Back Problems

Oheneba Boachie-Adjei MD, Andra Fischgrund Stanton, Ruth Hiatt-Coblentz

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Safe Techniques to Reduce Pain, Build Strength, and Speed Recovery

Studies suggest that proactive strengthening and flexibility-recovery exercises can speed healing after spine surgery. Whether you're preparing for or recovering from spinal surgery, recuperating from a back injury, or just dealing with a back that has 'issues,' this book offers an effective program to help you manage pain and regain strength and mobility.

These exercises modify traditional Pilates routines to accommodate partially immobilized spines, making this routine safe and effective therapy for your fragile back. The exercises are designed to not compromise a spinal fusion. Instead, they will do what Pilates exercises do best—stretch, strengthen, and tone the trunk with precise positioning and movement, while avoiding potentially dangerous repetition and overexertion.

Pilates for Fragile Backs is an excellent program for people who have had spinal fusion. The simple but effective Pilates-based exercises will help tremendously in reducing pain and restoring mobility.

-Vijay Vad, MD, assistant professor of rehabilitation medicine at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University and author of *Back Rx* and *Arthritis Rx*

*...Adhering to a program of Pilates, as described in **Pilates for Fragile Backs**, under the guidance of a certified instructor can be a most useful means to improve back function and relieve pain. Clearly, this is a valuable therapeutic modality that is underutilized in today's current pain management programs associated with spinal disorders.*

-Charles Birbara, MD, chief of rheumatology at Worcester City Hospital in Worcester, MA

*In my practice, I constantly emphasize the importance of proper spinal alignment, good posture and a strong mid-section. **Pilates for Fragile Backs** highlights these points in an easy-to-follow exercise program for patients suffering with chronic back pain. I have recommended this program to many of my patients, and they are thrilled with the results.*

-Anthony S. Rainka, DC, South County Chiropractic, Sutton, MA

*As a physical therapist, I have been able to utilize the exercises in **Pilates for Fragile Backs** with my clients. They have shown a reduction in pain, an improvement in posture and balance, increased strength, and healthier muscle tone. Best of all, the program does wonders for their self-esteem.*

-Pam Craig-Stewart, PT, director of rehabilitation at Christopher House in Worcester, MA

This book is a much needed labor of love that offers clear and helpful advice for anyone who has ever lived with chronic back pain. The spine problems addressed in this book are very challenging ones for doctors and therapists alike, and the authors use their first hand experience with spinal trauma to break new ground for exercise therapy. A specifically modified Pilates program indeed offers the possibility of comfort and relief for a largely under-served group in our society.

-Ellen Kiley, RYT, therapeutic yoga practitioner specializing in scoliosis and spinal fusion

*I underwent an anterior/posterior fusion (L4-S1) over a year ago due to degenerative disk disease with annular tears. Since then, Pilates has done wonders for me. I started pursuing basic lumbar stabilization mat work a couple of months following surgery. I had urged my neurosurgeon to allow me to begin sooner than usual because I'd had a big increase in pain. My physical therapist felt it had to do with the stiffness that begins to set in as the weeks go by without stretching and exercising. I had every confidence that Pilates would improve my situation and I swear by it! I've been back to work full-time. I am also walking about four miles, three days a week! I'm sure **Pilates for Fragile Backs** will be a major help to many others.*

-Diana Stahl, Cincinnati, OH

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