

is the single reason that Pilates flattens abs so quickly," comments Ungaro.

Improve Eating Habits

"The increased body awareness will also make you less likely to indulge in unhealthy eating habits," notes Ungaro. Experiencing the improvements to your body and of what it's capable is incredibly motivating. "You will have a new respect for your body and be more likely to take better care of it," she says.

Complete with Cardio

No weight loss regimen is complete without cardiovascular work. Combining the strength training of Pilates and a consistent cardio session works to help you lose weight and tone up nearly twice as fast as doing either routine on its own. Walking up hills works, or to add variety and challenge, "Consider swimming, running or the elliptical machine," suggests Ungaro. "Steady-state activity is great for cardio conditioning."

Victoria Everman, a freelance writer in San Francisco, California, contributes to Gaiam.com, from which this was adapted.

Physical Methods for Results

Stacey Redfield, the owner of the Physical Methods Pilates studio in Bethlehem, has been producing strong, healthy bodies for the past 11 years using the Pilates machines as her main focus.

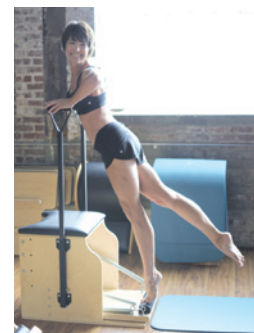
"If Pilates didn't work, people would not keep coming back," states Redfield. "I teach a challenging group of exercises, circuit style, rotating my clients from one machine to another over the course of a one hour class. It's not just the exercises that give you results, but it's where you focus that makes Pilates effective."

Pilates corrects the posture, which returns the muscles to their correct anatomical position, which allows the body to work more efficiently. Strong posture creates a balance in the body, allowing you to stand taller and move more gracefully.

"Breathing is so important," adds Redfield. "Most people don't realize how many muscles are needed to do something as simple as taking a breath. Those muscles need to be strengthened just as much as any other muscle and the only way to do that is to breathe."

Redfield recommends that new students begin with a few private lessons to become familiar with her methodology, the machines, and the Pilates vocabulary. "Pilates is hard work but my classes are so much fun. I think that is why many of my clients have been with me since I began teaching 11 years ago."

Physical Methods is located at 653 E Broad Street in Bethlehem. Call 610-814-0603 or visit www.StaceyRedfield.com for more information.



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