ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Volume-7 | Issue-6 | June-2018 | PRINT ISSN No 2277 - 8179

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

ROLE OF PILATES TRAINING TO MANAGE STRESS

Physiotherapy

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Stressors have a major influence upon mood, our sense of well being, physical and mental health. There is higher prevalence rate of psychological disorder such as depression, anxiety and stress now-a-days. Pilates training have proven useful for treating stress related disorders and to improve the sense of well being. This paper aims to investigate the effects of Pilates training to manage the stress.
METHODS: Various articles have been reviewed from Google Scholar to study the effects of Pilates training for managing the stress.
RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS: Pilates training is a successful tool for self management of the stress reaction. The principles of Pilates training helps in managing the stress.

KEYWORDS

Stressors, Diaphragmatic Breathing, Centering

Pilates was discovered by Joseph Hubertus Pilates during the early 1900s.It was originally named as 'Contrology', which was inspired by a variety of techniques drawn from medication, yoga, etc.

Pilates is a physically demanding practice which strengthens the body's powerhouse (the core) with a series of fluid movements performed in a precise manner, and is accompanied by specialized breathing techniques and intense mental concentration.

Pilates training involve mat exercises with no equipment, mat work with various resistance apparatus, machine-assisted exercises (the specialized Pilates machines called as Reformers), or a combination of all these techniques.

Pilates provide complete coordination of body, mind and spirit. Pilates is based on six principles which enable to increase attention, motivation and enhance cognitive functions while minimizing stress on the body (Ungaro, 2002). Thus, it helps in the stress management program.

IMPACT OF PILATES ON STRESS

Pilates reduces the stress by following mechanism:

- Increases body energy
- Increases sleep quality
- Release negative thinking
- Body become more comfortable
- Breathing exercises decrease anxiety
- Increase attention and concentration
- Improve blood flow and oxygen circulation to the brain
- Relaxes the muscles

Pilates method is a successful tool for the self management of the stress reaction. In 1920, Joseph Pilates (founder of the Pilates method) defined his work with six principles that are remarkably similar to today's proven methods of managing stress: Relaxation, Breathing, Concentration, Guided Imagery, Heightened body awareness and mindfulness. These methods can help the patients successfully reduce the negative stress in their lives when they are combined with the cuing skills.

RELAXATION

Pilates instructors incorporate verbal commands and physical touch which helps to bring about selective relaxation. Muscles should be recruited which are needed for the physical activity, while all other muscles should remain relaxed.

BREATHING

This is a primary principle in Pilates and Diaphragmatic breathing plays a vital role in managing the stress through this principle which creates awareness of moment in people's lives.

CONCENTRATION

This is also an important principle in Pilates which helps in stress management as we focus on recruitment and relaxation of particular muscle groups and it further helps in progressive relaxation..

GUIDED IMAGERY

This method or principle is also based on relaxation which in turn helps in the stress management.

HEIGHTENED BODY AWARENESS

It can be reached through principles of precision, control and centering. Patients learn to be very precise in their movements by making each movement controlled and rhythmic and it can directly affect patient's ability to manage physical stress.

MINDFULNESS

When we are mindful, our full attention is in the present moment and it further decreases the negative stress from our lives.

Pilates results in a flatten abdomen and stronger back while improving balance and posture and decreasing stress levels.

Physical activity also protects us from the stress and ill health as it acts as an empowering factor. Additionally physical activity positively influences on health status and fitness, reduces the risk of several diseases and promotes mental health and well being. Relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation and deep breathing activate the body's relaxation response, a state of restfulness. When practiced regularly, these activities can reduce everyday stress levels and boost feelings of joy and serenity. It increases ability to stay calm.

Pilates can be incredibly powerful in providing a place for the body to relax, rejuvenate and release tension. The breath principle in the Pilates creates a physiological response in the body that naturally decreases our stress and anxiety.

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