

## Pilates on Call: Core Conditioning PTs



In the third installment of Pilates on Call—our month-long open Q&A with Pilates experts—we're thrilled to welcome the owners of **Core Conditioning** in Los Angeles: Dawn-Marie Ickes, MPT (l); Allyson Cabot, PT (m); and Gabrielle Shrier, MPT (r). The three physical therapists/Pilates instructors founded Core Conditioning, a pair of integrated wellness centers, in 2003, where they combine physical therapy with Pilates and Gyrotonic for rehabilitation, as well as offer group [classes](#).

This month, **they will be taking your questions on joint injuries and issues**—hips, knees, shoulders, feet, spine, neck, etc. Chances are you have encountered clients with problems with all of the above and more. Or perhaps you have a new client with an injury you've never dealt with before. Here's your chance to get the PT-Pilates perspective on how to help them. Post your questions in the comments section below or email [editor@pilates-pro.com](mailto:editor@pilates-pro.com). Dawn-Marie, Allyson and Gabrielle will get to them as quickly as possible, but might need a day or two to respond.

### More About Dawn-Marie, Allyson and Gabrielle

*In addition to owning and operating Core Conditioning, the trio has developed and continues to teach educational programs internationally for Pilates instructors and health care professionals, integrating Pilates and rehabilitation. They also teach a comprehensive teacher [training program](#) as faculty members for Balanced Body University. All three specialize in women's health; Dawn-Marie also specializes in pediatrics and sports medicine; Allyson's specialties include dance medicine, mind-body healthcare and craniosacral therapy; Gabrielle specializes in neurologic disorders and orthopedics.*

Posted on Tuesday, June 9, 2009 at 04:20PM by  Amy Leibrock in [Anatomy](#), [Physical therapy](#), [Special Populations](#), [Teaching Strategies](#), [rehabilitation](#) |  39 Comments

### Reader Comments (39)

I've condensed and moved some entries to make reading through these Q&As easier. If you'd like to ask a question, leave it at the end of the comments or email [editor@pilates-pro.com](mailto:editor@pilates-pro.com).

Thanks,  
Amy/Editor

June 10, 2009 |  Amy Leibrock/Editor

Hi

I have a client with a slipped disc and sciatica in his right leg. This is what I received from his physio: "He has moderate disc protrusion at multiple levels. This has impacted on neural mobility and caused irritation. The most important aspect with the rehab is to re-educate re: neutral spine and make this functional ie standing, sitting, cycling position etc. I would suggest that stabilizer activation is of prime importance and this to be done again in functional postures. The Erector Spinae complex is over-firing and will be the prime mover for all motion - try to inhibit this. I would dissuade flexion movements and particularly flexion/rotation. Hence, the normal mat routine will not be applicable."

My client is used to very active & high impact sports (cycling, running etc), so small movements with small ROM etc are difficult for him to focus on. I would appreciate any ideas on what I can do to keep it slow & sure, but still keep him challenged and motivated. Particularly when work for the core is done in extension (incl Erector Spinae!) if flexion is contra-indicated...

Many thanks.

Kind regards  
Anne

Hello Anne,

First and foremost - DO NOT BE DISC-OURAGED - a definite pun intended, there are so many ways to keep the matwork challenging by modifying a few simple things to ensure the maintenance of Neutral and to work towards core stabilization in neutral and extension-based exercises. We have also included other exercise options on the equipment as well should you have access to it.

Keep in mind and as you know, the matwork really is the most challenging and will definitely tap into his athletic prowess if done appropriately. Reiterate frequently to your client that the fundamentals of core stability will support his body's spinal integrity and are the foundation of what high-level athletes need to have to be truly effective at whatever endeavor they pursue.

#### **Mat**

- Neutral (ASIS and pubic symphysis parallel in the frontal plane) & Grounding
- Foam roller – ironing, puppet arms, alternate UE with ironing, arm circles, swan, plank/push-ups
- Quadruped – grounding, airplaning
- Side-bridging
- Kneeling with elbow press on ball (kneeling plank)
- Side-lying leg work
- Scapula push-ups – single leg kick, double leg kick
- Leg pull back – front support
- Prone extension w/arm circles
- Flower on ball or long box
- Leg pull up – back support
- Side-kick kneeling
- Theraband pectoral stretch
- Plank
- Plank with LE extension

#### **Reformer**

- Quadruped abdominals (facing forward and back)
- Scooter (with UE-sling activator)
- Plank – Long Stretch
- Balance Control Front
- Seated ER / IR (on long box, moon box or seated)
- Rowing (rhomboids)
- Scapula adduction with straight arms (middle trap) (on long box)
- Long box series – pulling straps, triceps, T-press, breaststroke, swan prep
- Knee stretch series

#### **Trapeze**

- High-kneeling chest expansion (with squats)
- Boxer
- Hug a tree
- Prone extension w/arm circles
- Scapula draw downs (on moon box)
- Kneeling biceps/triceps with tower bar
- Squat
- Biceps curl into squat with roll down bar-using rolldown bar and arm springs

#### **Wunda Chair**

- Triceps press (seated on floor)
- Swan (bilateral and unilateral arm push)
- Swan on floor (proceed with caution)
- Neutral bridge on floor with feet on pedal-add body on foam roller to increase instability/integrate core stabilizers

Thanks,  
Dawn-Marie, Allyson, Gabrielle

**For additional postings please visit:**  
**<http://www.pilates-pro.com/pilates-pro/2009/6/9/pilates-on-call-core-conditioning-pts.html>**

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