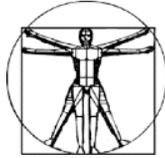


## ASK THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST

### NEWSLETTER SEPT. 2017 MUSCLE EFFICIENCY



I was taking ballet class the other day and during a combination at the barre that ended in an arabesque in releve, I was having difficulty balancing. For those of you who don't know ballet terminology, an arabesque is when your leg is extended off the floor behind you and releve is a heel raise. As I was thinking of my alignment and where my weight was placed on the standing leg and foot, I slowly took my hand off the barre to see if it was placed where it should be and what corrections I had to make. I didn't feel very stable so I kept correcting myself, not sure if what I was sensing was really happening. I have very good body awareness, but something was off.

Then my teacher saw me and told me to relax my back. As soon as she said that I could feel the tension in my back and into my buttocks. When I relaxed those areas suddenly I was able to engage my abdominals. The position became so easy to maintain and I was balancing.

So why am I telling you this? Well for 2 different reasons: 1. Even though I am quite aware of my body, you still need others to see how you move for corrections and modifications 2. As you let go of your incorrect movements other areas become engaged that allow for better efficiency of muscle use and movement.

Let's look at reason #2. This is something I always work on with you, as clients, efficiency and ease of movement. It goes back to the core. Your body has to stabilize you somewhere so that another area can move. I was using my back muscles to stabilize an activity that required me to use my abdominals (part of the core) to balance. Once I engaged the correct muscles, the rest was easy and natural.

It is difficult for us to see ourselves and how we move. That is why having a second pair of trained eyes is beneficial in correcting abnormal movement patterns. Our incorrect habits have become the "norm" for us, so we don't even realize that our movement/alignment is probably the cause of why we get injured. That makes it even more important to have a specialist see how you are moving and give you feedback on how to normalize it.

I will be giving a workshop on October 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 at Joy of Motion Friendship Heights where I will delve further into this concept. If you missed it the last time, please come join me. For questions, contact me.

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**We change people's lives by  
giving them the confidence to  
achieve their goals of an  
active, mobile lifestyle  
without the use of pain  
medications or surgery.**

Did you know that Maryland has Direct Access for physical therapy? That means you can see a Physical Therapist without seeing your physician first and getting a prescription. We can evaluate and treat you without a referral. Through the extensive evaluation, if I feel that other issues may be involved that may require you to see your physician, I will refer you back or recommend someone who is appropriate for you.

**STILL NEED HELP? CALL TO DISCUSS YOUR ISSUES OR BOOK AN APPOINTMENT IF YOU ARE READY: 301-493-9257**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Alignment/Movement workshop for Recovering from Injuries: Friday October 13<sup>th</sup> 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Joy of Motion Dance Center/Friendship Heights, 5207 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Washington DC**

**Pilates/Exercise class: 5 class series for \$105 Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>-Oct.11<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays 12-1 at 10410 Kensington Parkway, Suite 111, Kensington, MD 20895**

If we do not have your email address, please send it to [cynthiaweiss@verizon.net](mailto:cynthiaweiss@verizon.net). This will keep you updated on events and ensure that you receive the quarterly newsletters.

If you are still unsure of Physical Therapy, we offer a 100% **free 20 minute Discovery Call** to answer all your questions and to see if you are the right fit for our clinic. **Call us at: 301-493-9257.** We will get back to you the same day as soon as we are finished with our other patients.

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