



## Life after a Hip Replacement

*by Kathy McCann*

It has been three years since my Total Hip Replacement Surgery. Through the practice of Pilates I have been able to rehabilitate my body from years of over compensation and retrain my neuromuscular transmitters to fire in proper order. I have regained my active lifestyle and enjoy the added benefits of knowing this form of exercise will take me through the remainder of my life.

My journey in Pilates began in Maui, Hawaii, in 1999 when I started having chronic hip pain. I had been a fitness instructor and personal trainer since 1990 and taught high impact classes and lots of step aerobics. I thought I was strong and fit. After all, I did 300 crunches, oblique twists, and reverse abdominal curls daily. I was immediately humbled by my lack of bodily control and inability to execute the exercises with control.

When I first heard about Pilates most people could not even pronounce it much less was the public aware of all the rehabilitative benefits. Pilates helped me manage my chronic pain by keeping the spine and joints working in alignment, and improving the range of motion in the joints keeping them moving freely and unencumbered. When I decided Pilates was the way of my future I decided to get certified and learn as much as possible about this miracle form of exercise. Gone are the days of no pain no gain. I was fortunate enough to work at a certifying studio that specialized in rehab. Pilates helped me managed my pain for over five years, until my condition worsened and in 2004 I had a Total Hip Replacement.

There are three hip precautions that need to be considered when working with post operative hip replacement clients. **First, no hip flexion on the affected side past a 90 degree angle, do not adduct the leg past the midline of the body. Lastly, there is to be no internal rotation at the hip joint.** These three motions could improve the chances of a dislocation of the prosthesis, which would require another surgery. I have found very few exercises that I cannot execute with little or some modification to fit with in the precautions. Once I got the doctors clearance, after about six weeks I started working with a Physical

**Kathy McCann**, owner of **Pilates in Paradise** studio in Maui, Hawaii, is a Certified Pilates Trainer and Lifestyle Fitness Coach with over 17 years experience in the mind –body/fitness industry. She studied Pilates under the direction of VIM Studios in Austin, Texas and obtained her certification through The PhysicalMind Institute in 2002.

Kathy has worked as the fitness director at The Ritz Carlton Kapalua and Princess Cruises. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Organizational Communication from St. Edwards University, Austin, Texas.

Kathy's philosophy is to improve the client's quality of life by teaching them to move their bodies effectively the way God intended, with grace and beauty. This is accomplished by aligning the body and strengthening the core muscles to relieve pain, muscle tension, and reduce the risk of other sports related injuries.

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Therapist who was certified through PhysicalMind. I began my rehab in the pool practicing standing Pilates and concentrating on proper gait and alignment with deep water walking. My previous training in Pilates had strengthened my core but because of chronic pain and overcompensation I was unbalanced. It was very important to start with the fundamentals to retrain my body and what it felt like to work from the proper form.

The misalignments I had to correct started with a pronation in the right foot, left hip hike, weakened obliques, and winging in the right shoulder blade. The feet are your base of support so correcting this problem was first on the list. The ankle bone is truly connected to the neck bone. Below is the protocol my trainer and I devised to address these issues:

Modified Roll Ups (*Standing*)

Bridging w/ variations (*Mat*)

Hundreds (*Mat*)

Knee folds with roll down bar under knees on Cadillac (*modified Airplane*)

Roll Down Series

Footwork (*Reformer; no internal rotation*)

Single Leg Footwork

Sleepers

Side Split (*Reformer*)

Mermaid (*Chair*)

I have been back to work training and teaching Pilates for 2 years now. The work I have done on my own body has giving me the greatest respect for this work and what it can really accomplish beyond the hype of flat abs and a tight bum. Pilates and the good Lord have given me back my life again and strengthened my passion and dedication for sharing the work with others.

**May you prosper and be in good health,  
just as your soul prospers.**

**III John 2**

