

# PILATES and YOU

When was the last time you sweated it out at the gym? Climbed the overhead bridge without panting? Felt sexy about yourself? Didn't feel sluggish throughout the day? If your answers are less positive than they should be, then perhaps you will find yourself thinking, feeling, and acting like a 35-year-old stuck in a 45-year-old's body.

But all is not lost. Just take a leaf from Claudel Kuek. The mother of two is a trained ballerina, and also the studio director of PowerMoves, a pilates and dance studio situated amidst the lush greenery of Bishan Park. Looking at the lithe 43-year-old, one can hardly guess her age, and all will envy her washboard abs and slender figure. Find out from Claudel on how pilates has benefited her and her family, and how it can do the same for you.



**Which was your biggest problem area before you picked up pilates?**

After giving birth to two babies, the area around my stomach seemed to be less tight and not as flat as my pre-pregnancy days.

**How did you conquer the problem through pilates?**

Pilates works at strengthening the core muscles, which is located in the abdominal region, and helps to give you that flat-as-a-washboard look.

**Which part of your body are you most proud of?**

Most certainly my abs!

**What does your husband say about your body?**

He says my body is strong, feminine, and sexy. He likes telling people that I am 43-years old because nobody takes him seriously on that.

**Does pilates help improve bedroom activities?**

Having confidence in knowing that you have worked out your body to the best of its ability will make you feel sexy and empowered, both in and out of the bedroom.

***Is your family into pilates as well?***

Yes, my hubby is working on his six-pack abs and has started regular workouts on the Reformer, a bench-like exercise machine. My kids love the pilates equipment for its fun factor and versatility.

***Which is the more graceful art of the two – pilates or ballet?***

Ballet and pilates are very similar in that they work from a very strong centre (the core) to allow our limbs to move gracefully and fluidly in a masterful dance or circuit choreography for the body and mind.

***What is your daily exercise regime and diet like?***

I do pilates three times a week, and throw in dance for my dose of cardio. My diet is filled with fruits and vegetables, dry cereals, and seafood. Indulgences are treats we all deserve but consume in small portions and only twice a week, please.

***What regime would you recommend for dads who want to lose the paunch?***

A lot of core-strengthening exercises. The pilates routine will help you lose your paunch as you strengthen your back.

***What about mums with pear-shaped bodies?***

Focus on working the muscles surrounding the hips, butt, and thighs. Some bodies are built to be pear-shaped – look at your mum for a glimpse of what you might look like in the not-so-distant future. Pilates can help you achieve your best body possible by giving you long, lean muscles, a flatter stomach, a smaller waistline, a perky butt, and toned thighs and calves.

***What shouldn't people expect out of pilates?***

If you are overweight by a lot, pilates alone will not help you lose the excess fat and weight. You will need to follow your doctor's orders of a healthy low fat diet and a regular regime of cardiovascular workouts. Pilates will complement that by stretching your body and strengthening your muscles as you lose weight.



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