

Serving the local community since 2001

Back in Shape



Physiotherapy & Pilates



Helen's Pilates

Term dates: 2017 Term 2

Start: Tuesday 18 April

End: Friday 30 June

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**Alphington Bowls Club
Parkview Rd, Alphington**

All ages and abilities classes

Mon: 12-1pm

Wed: 5.30-6.30pm

Fri: 9.15-10.15am & 10.30-11.30am

Cost:

Mon: 9-week term: \$180

Wed & Fri: 11-week term: \$220

OR \$25/class casual

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**Fairfield Community Room
Station St, Fairfield**

Over 50s class

Mon: 9.30-10.15am

Limited mobility class

Mon: 10.30-11.15am

Cost:

9-wk term: \$90

OR \$10/class casual

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PUBLIC HOLIDAY ALERT:

**There will be no classes on
Monday 12 June (Queen's Birthday)**

Physio & Pilates Appointments

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These feet were made for walking

I recently read a great article, which you can find at the following link, on the benefits of walking:

<http://theconversation.com/new-study-shows-more-time-walking-means-less-time-in-hospital-71554>

The article summarises a long-term community-based health study which used pedometers to record the daily steps taken by the participants and correlated these measured activity levels with long-term health. The active people (as measured by those taking more than 8,800 steps a day) required on average 30 per cent fewer days in hospital each year than the less active people (who were taking less than 4,500 steps a day).

The analysis was adjusted for the effects of age, gender, pre-existing conditions, smoking, alcohol consumption and education, and even tested to ensure the correlation wasn't simply showing that sick people walk less. But the results were clear: any activity is good for you; and generally speaking, the more the better.

One of the benefits of using pedometers is that it records all movement, not just continuous walking. A stay-at-home mum might not do any formalised exercise and yet running round after her children and running a house often clocks up more steps than somebody spending half an hour on the treadmill but otherwise leading a sedentary existence.

Moreover, the study indicated that more active people had fewer hospital admissions for cancer and diabetes. Extrapolating the data further, we can surmise that if everybody over the aged of 55 were to walk at least 8,800 steps a day, the hospitalisation requirement in Australia could be reduced by 975,000 beds per year, saving the country a staggering \$1.7 billion.

The actual difference between the inactive- and the active-assessed people is a mere 4,300 steps a day, which equates to just 40 minutes of walking. And remember, this doesn't need to be a 40-minute 'no-pain-no-gain' type of ordeal; it can just be a cumulative additional 40 minutes of motion throughout the day.

The takeaway message is that we would all benefit from moving as much as possible. We should aim to drive less, especially when running local errands. For those who go to the gym or Pilates, why not walk instead of mindlessly taking the car? If driving is unavoidable,



you can always choose to park a block away from your destination, or even choose a park at the far end of the car park instead of trying to get as close as possible. As well as increasing your step count, you might also lower your stress levels and even improve your mental health!

Even small changes like standing or walking while talking on the phone will help rack up those steps. One of the beauties of walking, of course, is that we do not need to spend serious amounts of money in 'getting all the right kit'. Often everyday clothes and footwear will suffice. If necessary, try wearing more comfortable shoes for your commute, for instance, and change into smarter shoes once you arrive at work.

Having said that, while walking is 'free', investing in a pedometer (or fitness tracking device, such as those offered by Fitbit) is a great way to measure what you are already doing, set realistic goals for improvements and provide ongoing motivation. I know a postie who habitually walks 15-20km during his working day. He purchased a Fitbit, and tells me that it encourages him to take longer and hillier routes wherever he has a choice, and after work he often does a few hill reps to meet his stair-climb goal for the day! He says that the fact that his activity is being measured provides the incentive to do more.

For the less active, aiming for a minimum of 8,800 steps a day is a good place to start, although it might be necessary to gradually increase your exercise level to meet this. Equally, once you are achieving 8,800 steps a day, there is nothing to stop you setting higher goals; a 10 per cent increase per week is safe, realistic and sustainable in the long term.

As always, if you have any concerns about embarking on a fitness program, always check with your doctor or healthcare professional.

For the rest of you, I want to see those feet moving!



Massage maintenance

A hands-on approach

The simple truth is that most people would benefit from a massage, whether they realise it or not!

Many people believe a massage to be slightly self-indulgent or a bit of a treat: something for special occasions only perhaps.

However, I liken a massage to taking your car for a regular service. We do this to provide routine maintenance, to identify minor problems and take action before they become serious issues.

A weekly massage would be ideal, but if time or cost is an issue a monthly massage is better than nothing: something we all should consider locking into our schedule.

A massage may even save you time and money in the long term, as it often helps identify new or worsening niggles. A massage often prevents a relatively minor issue developing into a more acute injury resulting in more pain, or progressing into an overuse chronic condition, either of which would necessitate further physiotherapy.

A regular massage will enable you to find the pain before it finds you. It will put you in touch with your body so you are better able to spot incipient problems yourself.

So do yourself a favour for a healthier holistic you. Book your next massage today.

Traffic Light Exercises

We are all busy. Many of us struggle to incorporate meaningful exercise into our daily routine, as this often drops quite low on our list of priorities. Equally, I am sure we are all familiar with the frustration of waiting at seemingly endless sets of traffic lights. This series of exercises has been devised to help you make the most of those wasted minutes and inject small bursts of quality exercise into your routine.

Pelvic Tilts

Make sure you are sitting up nice and tall in such a way that your spine—especially the small of your back—is supported by the backrest of your seat. Now, feel a lengthening through the crown of your head and ensure your chin is comfortably tucked in. You are now ready to begin:

- Take a breath in and as you breathe out draw your belly button in towards the small of your back, so that you can feel the small of your back flatten and press against the back of the seat
- As you breathe in, slowly control the return of your back to the start position. If there is no pain, you can see if you can allow your back to arch a little further
- Stay sitting tall throughout the movement and don't allow yourself to shrink!
- Repeat this 5-6 times, trying to get the movement as smooth, symmetrical and controlled as you can

