

# Stay active



Autumn/Winter 2011

## University of Bristol Sports Medicine Clinic Newsletter

Welcome to the clinic's Autumn/Winter Edition. We are actively involved in looking after the University students and staff, as well as members of the public from Bristol and South West. The clinic has 2 sites: within Sport, Exercise and Health, Tyndall Avenue, Clifton, in the heart of the University, and at the University Playing Fields at Coombe Dingle Sports Complex, Stoke Bishop. Autumn usually marks an increase in sports injuries as people start their winter sports activities. Changes in lifestyle associated with starting or returning to University, starting a new sport or activity or the onset of colder weather can all be associated increased pain and injury incidence. We hope this newsletter gives you information that helps you stay fit and healthy in the lead up to Christmas and into 2012.

Claire Callaghan, editor



**We keep our clients active and painfree, working not only to treat injuries, but prevent recurrences. Our clients are of all ages and sporting abilities. To support them, we have a multidisciplinary team comprising of physiotherapists, an osteopath, sports masseurs, pilates instructors and an acupuncturist, the largest of its type in Bristol.**

**Open to the General Public**

### New faces

We have new staff working with us, bringing a diverse range of skills to the clinic.

**Dr Jonathan Williams**, Sports Physician and experienced GP, has recently joined our team. He works with active people of all abilities, providing expert medical opinion and treatment to guide people back to full muscle and joint health. A keen triathlete, he has worked extensively with runners, triathletes and with Bristol Rugby, and will be helping our elite High Performance Athletes as needed over the coming year.

**Lisa Baker**, Senior Physiotherapist, brings exciting new skills to our team. She worked as the resident physiotherapist for Cats and West Side Story on the West End and on tour in Europe, and was the appointed physiotherapist for BBC's Strictly Come Dancing in 2010. Having worked with acute and overuse injuries in a high pressure environment, she can provide expert help and treatment to our patients. Lisa is also a qualified Pilates instructor. Working part time in the NHS at Frenchay Hospital, she has up to date orthopaedic and trauma skills. She is perfectly placed to help active, sporty people, those with theatrical or dancing needs and Pilates based Physiotherapy.

For those needing a firm sports massage, **Matt Williams**, Sports Massage Therapist, is working at our Coombe Dingle site. He has also been working with Bristol Rugby and within the NHS.

### Working with excellence

The Sports Medicine Clinic team is working closely with the Bristol University High Performance Squad. The squad has over 30 national and international elite student athletes. They compete in a wide variety from a wide variety of sports, from rugby to lacrosse, hockey to mountain biking.



Sport, Exercise and Health

[bristol.ac.uk/sport](http://bristol.ac.uk/sport)



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## Fit and fabulous

The clinic is involved in 'Fit and Fabulous', exciting new initiative getting female staff and students at the University of Bristol active and attractive. The program is based on the belief that regular exercise is the best treat you can give yourself, making you feel fitter, happier and healthier. In support of the program, the clinic offers free pilates classes at the start of each term, and will offer further services such as free open clinics and 'fit to ski' classes over the University year. See our website for details of free classes and clinics.



## Running is good for you!

The recent University of Bristol study, part of the ALSPAC (Children of the 90's) study, concluded that *vigorous* physical activity - running and jogging - had great benefits for bone development in teenagers, whereas gentle activity such as walking had little effect.

## In other words, impact and loading are required for healthy bone architecture.

Running is one way to help build and maintain healthy bones, provided that you pay attention to basic principles, such as:

- Build up training levels gradually (increase by no more than 10% a week)
- Allow adequate recovery time (particularly after prolonged/intense workouts and as you get older)
- Have your injuries sorted by a professional who understands running injuries

## Omega-3 fatty acids shown to prevent or slow progression of osteoarthritis

New Bristol University research has shown for the first time that omega-3 in fish oil could "substantially and significantly" reduce the signs and symptoms of osteoarthritis.

According to the University of Bristol study, funded by Arthritis Research UK and published in the journal *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*, omega-3-rich diets fed to guinea pigs, which naturally develop osteoarthritis, reduced disease by 50 per cent compared to a standard diet. The research is a major

step forward in showing that omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil or flax oil, may help to slow progression of osteoarthritis, or even prevent it. Lead researcher Dr John Tarlton, said early signs of the condition, such as the degradation of collagen in cartilage and loss of molecules that give it shock-absorbing properties, were both reduced with omega-3.

Osteoarthritis affects around eight million people in the UK, and is caused when the cartilage at the ends of bones wears away and the underlying bone thickens, leading to stiff, painful joints. Currently, there is no effective treatment to slow down disease progression, and treatment is limited to pain relief and ultimately joint replacement.

Interestingly, Arthritis Research UK has launched a campaign: 'Taking the pain out of Sport.' This promotes the health benefits of activity, but highlights that untreated or poorly managed sports injuries and subsequent joint damage can cause excess joint wear and tear. Further, it can lead to interruption or cessation of sporting activity and may link to arthritis developing in later life, thus emphasising the importance of treating injuries quickly and effectively.



## Prevention is better than cure!

We all know it important to avoid muscle and joint overload and to prevent a niggle turning into something more serious. Sports massage can be a vital part of ensuring this process is managed.

Typically injuries occur when people increase the frequency or intensity of their training sessions too quickly. A well-timed sports massage can help the body to break down any adhesions or tight areas in the muscles, which, if left untreated, can lead to further tightening, pain and long term muscle imbalances. Although massage can obviously help to treat an acute injury, if used when you first notice an ache or pain, it is less painful and the body often responds more quickly, meaning a quicker recovery. Whether you are putting the body through an ordeal on the rugby pitch or struggling to recover from a ski trip, sports massage can help keep your body free from aches and pains.

## Pilates – your questions answered

The clinic has offered Pilates since 2003, providing sessions for clients of all ages and abilities. Our dedicated team of teachers (all trained and accredited with the Pilates Foundation) offer expert tuition at all levels - ranging from individual rehabilitation sessions to demanding workouts for the exercise enthusiast.

Whilst many may have already experienced Pilates in one form or another, there are still some who have yet to venture into the unknown!

### What is Pilates?

It is a system of exercises with and without special apparatus, designed to improve physical strength, flexibility and posture and enhance mental awareness. It is recognised as being particularly effective for back and posture problems.

### Is it for me?

With our varied timetable of matwork classes and individual / small group sessions using the Pilates Equipment. Many long term clients have been referred by their Consultant, GP, Physiotherapist or Osteopath in order to continue their rehabilitation from an injury. With time and practise they progress to a higher level of

Pilates, as well as returning to their normal activities with minimal or no pain. If you have been encouraged to undertake Pilates by a health practitioner, we can provide a safe, supportive environment where medical and health expertise are at hand.

Pilates can be practised from our youth into more mature years, and is suitable for the fit and not so fit. We run tailor made (mat and equipment) sessions on a 1:1 and 1:3 basis and 4 levels of Mat classes - there really is something for everyone.

### Is it for men?

Definitely, yes! Equipment classes are especially popular with men, with famous sportsmen from Flintoff to Beckham citing the benefits.

We pride ourselves on providing our clients with a positive experience of Pilates. It is our aim to make you feel at ease and welcome you into our classes. We also invite you to learn more about us and our training so you are assured of receiving a truly professional service - please visit - [www.bris.ac.uk/sport/sportsmedicine/pilates](http://www.bris.ac.uk/sport/sportsmedicine/pilates) and [www.pilatesfoundation.com](http://www.pilatesfoundation.com)

