

PHAROS

A beacon of hope in the darkness

Newsletter of the Reading Prostate Cancer Support Group (RPCSG)

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Demonstrating our new banner are committee members Chris Addison (left) and David Priest. This banner was recently acquired and is used for display at our prostate cancer awareness events.

THE SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September meeting was attended by 50 people, including three new members. The guest speaker was Susan Tyne, a Pilates instructor. Her talk was about the history of Pilates and the way in which it can benefit everyone and can help in the recovery from illnesses including cancer.

Susan has been involved in dance, theatre and ballet, and started to use Pilates to increase the strength of her students.

Pilates was founded by Joseph Pilates. Born in 1883, he was a sickly child, suffering from asthma, rheumatic fever and other ailments. After the age of 14 he discovered that control of diet, breathing and the environment, all lead to reduced stress. He came to England in 1912, and became a circus performer, and taught self-defence to the police. He became a professional boxer. During the first world war he was interned, and worked on developing exercise. He later

introduced the use of some machinery, and also developed a system of exercise that he called Contrology, based on the use of mats.

Pilates develops core strength by movements of the abdomen and pelvic floor, and is also concerned with bodily alignments, weight placement, and correct breathing. It also features postures - the correct way of sitting and standing. The aims are to improve strength, stamina and flexibility.

Susan then invited the audience to join her in a set of exercises, for which she encouraged good posture and to sit upright. During which, one should breathe in through the nose, and exhale through the mouth.

Susan told us to tighten the pelvic floor as much as possible, imagining that it is a lift going to the 10th floor. Then slowly release the muscles, but retain them at the 3rd floor, thus holding the muscles at about 30% of their range. She then advised doing the

same but now with the abdominal muscles. She then advised us to lower the shoulders, as if carrying heavy bags.

All of the above engage the core. She advised engaging the core in this way whilst doing heavy work, such as gardening or vacuuming.

To develop one's muscles, Susan advised joining a class, and to find a sympathetic teacher who is capable of attending to each person's individual needs. A class should have a size of no more than 12 people.

Susan then took the audience through some more exercises. These involved sitting with the legs straight out, and the feet below the knees. Then with arms raised, hands together, twisting from side to side at the waist. Each exercise has an individual stretch and relaxation.

Then Susan laid on a mat to demonstrate some movements that can be carried out whilst lying or sitting on the mat. These involved various movements of bending, leaning, stretching, and raising of the legs. Then she and Chris demonstrated some exercises that can be carried out with a partner.

In response to a question, Susan said that Yoga is similar to Pilates, but the latter is the basis for movement. There is a subject sometimes known as Yopalates, that is part way between the two.

Susan advised that one should mobilise to prevent seizing up, and advised joining a group and attending lessons. The internet is a good place to look for these.

Susan was thanked for her informative talk, and was presented with a bouquet of flowers as a token of appreciation.



Susan demonstrating a pose



Some exercises can involve a partner

STATINS APPEAR TO FIGHT PROSTATE CANCER

Scientists from Birmingham said they have found striking reductions in the death rate among cancer patients diagnosed with high cholesterol. They have argued that treatment with the cholesterol-lowering drugs taken by millions of people in the UK is the most likely explanation. This finding applies to four of the most common cancers, being breast, prostate, bowel and lung cancers. Earlier conclusions of research on this effect of statins have also found a significant reduction in prostate cancer.

Dr Paul Carter, from Aston University in Birmingham, UK, presented the findings to a meeting of heart experts, in Italy. He said that patients with a high cholesterol level

have an improved survival level, and said that treatment with statins was a very strong possibility for this improvement.

Dr Rahul Potluri, founder of a Study Unit at Aston University that conducted the investigation, said: "Statins have some of the best mortality evidence amongst all cardiovascular medications, and statin use in patients with a diagnosis of high cholesterol is possibly the main reason that this diagnosis appears to be protective against death in patients".

Dr Potluri said that more clinical trials are needed, and that it is too early to routinely prescribe statins in all cases of cancer. However, this position could change if there was a positive result from clinical trials.

You can read more about this subject at this web page:

<http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/health/687685/cholesterol-reducing-statins-reduce-risk-of-dying-from-four-common-cancers>

Prostate Cancer UK made a report on the effect statins, about 12 months ago. They also concluded that the use of statins is beneficial, particularly when taken at the same time as hormone treatment. They also said that further trials are needed, as it is too early at present to recommend the taking of statins during their treatment as the trials to date have only looked at a sample of men who were taking statins for a reason unrelated to prostate cancer.

<http://prostatecanceruk.org/about-us/news-and-views/2015/5/new-research-into-statins-and-prostate-cancer>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

7th OCTOBER 2016

At the October meeting, Ann Innes of Prostate Cancer UK will talk about research in the field of prostate cancer.

4th NOVEMBER 2016

This group meeting will have a talk by a member of the Medical Research Centre, concerning the treatment of prostate cancer.

2nd DECEMBER 2016

This will be the annual Christmas Social buffet meal, to be held in the St Andrews Church Hall. Details will be available later.

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