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## CLINICAL AND RESEARCH REVIEW

# 'The core': Understanding it, and retraining its dysfunction

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Received 8 October 2012; received in revised form 7 February 2013; accepted 7 March 2013

**KEYWORDS**

Core strength;  
Back pain;  
Pilates;  
Yoga;  
Injury prevention

**Summary** "Core stability training" is popular in both the therapeutic and fitness industries but what is actually meant and understood by this concept? And does everyone need the same training approach?

This paper examines the landscape of 'the core' and its control from both a clinical and research perspective. It attempts a comprehensive review of its healthy functional role and how this is commonly changed in people with spinal and pelvic girdle pain syndromes.

The common clinically observable and palpable patterns of functional and structural change associated with 'problems with the core' have been relatively little described.

This paper endeavors to do so, introducing a variant paradigm aimed at promoting the understanding and management of these altered patterns of 'core control'.

Clinically, two basic subgroups emerge. In light of these, the predictable difficulties that each group finds in establishing the important fundamental elements of spino-pelvic 'core control' and how to best retrain these, are highlighted.

The integrated model presented is applicable for practitioners re-educating movement in physiotherapy, rehabilitation, Pilates, Yoga or injury prevention within the fitness industry in general.

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**Introduction**

Despite a lot of research around the subject, there is apparent confusion in understanding what goes wrong with 'the core' and how to properly retrain it. The noted researcher, McGill (2009) opines: "There's so much mythology out there about the core. The idea has reached trainers and through them the public that the core means only the abs. There's no science behind that".

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