

## Effect of 12 Weeks of Pilates Exercises on Improvement of Symptoms in Elderly Women with Mild Depression

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### Abstract

**Background:** Depression is a major mental illness and the most common psychiatric disorders in the elderly. The main objective of the present study was to investigate the effect of 12 weeks of Pilates on the treatment of depression in elderly non-athlete women.

**Materials and Methods:** This is a semi-experimental study. The sample consisted of 30 elderly non-athlete women selected from the community available to the elderly women in 2012 with an age range of  $64.93 \pm 3.83$  who had referred to Amirakbar Psychiatric Center in Kashan (Iran); they were randomly divided into two groups: experimental and control. Participants' depression was measured by the shortened Beck Depression Inventory - 13 (BDI-S-13). The experimental group for 12 weeks, three sessions per week, performed Pilates exercise program. In the statistical analysis, analysis of variance and post hoc T- tests (follow up test) were used by using the software T SPSS16 at  $P \leq 0.05$ .

**Results:** There was a significant decrease in depression in post test of the experimental group compared to the pre test ( $P \leq 0.001$ ); but in control group, there were observed no significant differences.

**Conclusion:** 12 weeks of Pilate's exercises was considered as a non-invasive, non-drug solution to a significant improvement of depression in elderly non-athletes women.

**Keywords:** Pilates exercises, Depression, elderly.

### Introduction

Rapid Growing of aging population and the profound impact of this phenomenon on the socio-economic conditions have provided ground for multilateral approaches such as social, physical and psychological attitudes (Robertson et al., 2004). Nowadays, with the development of science of medicine, economics, society, mortality rates has declined and Life expectancy is increasing. In fact, over time, the world population goes to the elderly; as the World Health Organization (WHO) defines aging crossing the border of 60 years and call this century as the elderly century (Cassilhas et al., 2007, Aslankhani et al., 2010). Thus, aging is a critical period of human life and attention to the issues and needs of this stage is a social necessity. This helps planners to take action according to the needs of elderly people (Cairney et al., 2005). Accordingly, one of the major problems with which the elderly has faced is mental health issues that impact on their quality of life (Netz et al., 2005). Depression is a major mental illness which in the study of psychological states, is considered by many researchers. Today, depression is considered as one of the most common mental disorders and general problems of human life. Depression referred to adequately durable disorder and its special signs which has undesirable