



How Barre Work Can Help Prevent and Heal Knee Injuries

SCOOP PERSPECTIVES — AUGUST 2, 2017

This is a guest post by [Hilliard Studio Method](#).

The impact on runners' joints can often affect their ability to train, which is why Hilliard Studio Method makes the perfect cross-training. Our high-intensity, yet low-impact method strengthens the muscles around clients' knees and joints and builds bone density to help prevent injury.

Why do women have more knee injuries than men?

NBA Trainer Tim S. Grover's Jump Attack attributes increased knee injuries in women to the imbalance in the female lower body. "A study performed at the University of Michigan showed women rely more on their quadriceps muscles in front of the thigh when landing from a jump, while men fare better by making fuller use of the hamstrings at the back of the thigh."

Researchers at Duke University found that females have a higher rate of knee injuries because they tend to keep their knees too straight while playing sports and jumping.

A University of North Carolina study indicated females put more strain on the ACL (one of the four major, and most commonly injured, ligaments in the knee) while running than compared to males. When the ACL is strained, its ability to work with the hamstring to stabilize the knee joint is limited and injury is more likely to occur. Common sense shows, as we examine the bone structure of the female lower body with wider hips and thigh bones angling in toward the knees, that there's going to be more non-direct, angled pressure on the knee joints than in men whose knees are directly below their hips.

What About Dealing with Knee Injury?

A recent study published in the [BMJ](#) (British Medical Journal) compared two different methods of recovery for a specific type knee injury: surgery and supervised exercise therapy. Surprisingly, it was found that the results of the two therapies were similar, meaning that those who had surgery experienced similar results as those who solely had exercise therapy. Even more, it was found that those who went through exercise therapy had greater muscle strength than those who went through surgery. Knee injuries can be serious and should be checked by a physician, but once you are cleared for physical activity, our HSM low-impact method can help strengthen the muscles around your knees to continue to heal and prevent further injuries.

How can Hilliard Studio Method help?

Hilliard Studio Method, as intense as it may be, is a low impact workout, meaning your joints aren't constantly being jarred as happens in running and sports.

The thigh work we do at the ballet barre not only strengthens the quadriceps and hamstrings, but also the smaller supporting muscles around the knee. In proper alignment, which is the key to working safely and efficiently, old knee injuries can heal as the muscles supporting the knee joint are strengthened. Thigh exercises that are particularly good for knee injuries are leg lifts, chair position, and the always popular 'John Travolta' move.

The stretches we do following thigh work help open up the backs of the legs that tend to be so tight and the hip flexors and quadriceps on the front of the thighs, leaving our muscles happy, toned, supple and less likely to be injured down the road. And as an added bonus, your gams are going to look super shapely!

