



Dance away arthritic pain

It has been found that rheumatoid arthritis sufferers who enrol in dance-based exercise once a week enjoy a significant improvement in mobility, reduction in joint pain, positive changes in depression, anxiety, fatigue and tension, and a reduced frequency in falls.

A recent study concluded that exercise programmes such as Pilates, yoga or dance fitness can relieve the pain of arthritis. The study was carried out at the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) in New York. Sandra Goldsmith, director of the Public and Patient Education Department at HSS said: "When participants were asked to report their level of pain severity, there were statistically significant reductions in pain from pre- to post-test."

For the study, researchers evaluated the effectiveness of weekly classes of t'ai chi, yoga, mat and chair Pilates and dance fitness on 200 participants.

Around 53% reported that they experienced pain relief as a result of participating. There was a 54% improvement in general activity, mood, walking ability, sleep, normal work, and enjoyment of life. Fewer respondents experienced falls post-test and, as a result, less sustained injuries that required hospitalisation. Dr Linda Russell, a rheumatologist, concluded: "Patients benefit from supervised exercise programmes with regard to their overall sense of well-being and pain due to their arthritis."

For those with the misfortune of experiencing arthritic pain, this certainly offers a very welcome, healthy and enjoyable solution.