



THE LOFT

PILATES STUDIO

Free Exercise: NAVEL TO SPINE April 2007

NAVEL TO SPINE: This exercise is the foundation of other Pilates exercises, including the advanced ones such as the Hundreds or Single Leg Stretch. The importance of proper pelvis alignment, also called **neutral pelvis**, is crucial in finding your abdominal connection.

Anatomy: You will be working your transverse abdominis, the deepest layer of abdominal muscles that runs from your pubic bone to your breastbone and wraps around you like a corset. Your navel (belly button) is only the centre of this vast muscle.

Role: Supports and stabilizes your lumbar spine. Holds your organs in place.

Position: Lie down on your back, with your knees bent, feet hip-width apart. Find "**neutral pelvis**" by placing the heels of your hands on your hip bones, and finger tips together on top of your pubic bone. Now level those two bones so that they are parallel to the floor.

Exercise: Breathe in gently through your nose and as you slowly exhale through your mouth move your navel towards your spine. Release and repeat a few more times. Keep neutral pelvis while doing this.

Note: When engaging your abs, your ribs may release towards the mat but watch that you do not flatten your lower back on the mat. Keep enough space behind your belly button the size of a small grape and do not squeeze your bum muscles.

