

By Bernie & Mary German

Thanks to rushed diets and fast food, combined with not having or making enough time to work out, your arms may feel a little more wiggly and baggy than they should! Well, summer's almost here, and we better make time!

When you want your shoulders, biceps, and triceps in full show-off mode, remember this: These small muscles respond quickly to strength training. Traditionally the thought has been that you can have gorgeous toned arms no matter what your fitness level. So do we run out and buy upper-body and upper arm workout tapes? No need if you are doing your Pilates regularly.

Research is showing more and more a definite connection between overall conditioning, especially core-condition and upper body and arm strength. One study had 50 middle-aged men and women do an hour of traditional Pilates moves twice a week for 12 weeks. Then they did push-ups to measure strength. They began the study doing 24 push-ups on their knees and ended up being able to do 35. (The control group began with 20.5 and ended with 21.) The arm strength was increased because the core strength was increased. If you can stabilize your core during push-ups you will be able to do more of them. A stronger core allows more of your arm muscles to do the work.

This means that a defined core should be paired with great looking arms. So along with your weights and dumbbells, get to your mat and a reformer classes and get sexy arms (along with a gorgeous, flat tummy) with your traditional Pilates workouts.

For more advanced shaping, toning and strengthening, talk to your Pilates instructor about more upper body work for great looking Summer Arms!