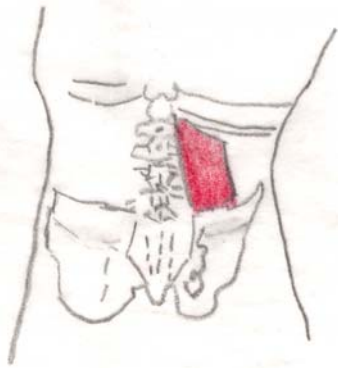


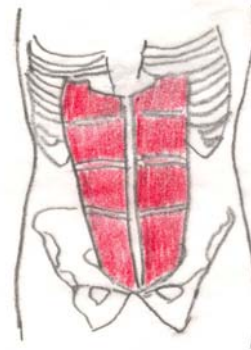
# 1<sup>ST</sup> LESSON OF BIOMECHANICS FOR THE RIDER

## THE BODY - TORSO

The positive tension in the torso of the rider is the major life-line of the half-halt. The tall torso helps the horse to balance himself. If the rider is stiff or wobbly, like a slinky, the horse cannot balance himself under the rider's seat. It's the same as a male ballet dancer or figure skater lifting his partner. If a woman does not hold her torso in positive tension with strong core muscles, she will weigh too much for the man. He will not be able to balance himself if she is wobbly. He will fall. The horse is built differently with four legs, therefore, only his chest will fall. He will carry himself onto his forehead with his chest down and his hind legs out behind him when he cannot balance himself up while carrying the rider. The rider's body is made up of ten layered muscles in the abdominal area and 9 layered muscles on the back of the lower torso. Different layered muscles are used while riding than in any other sport, and therefore can only be completely kept fit by riding.

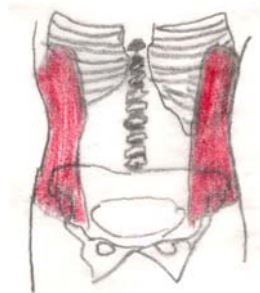


the internal oblique muscles



the rectus abdominis muscles

Several instructors may suggest that you let your stomach stick out, but that is incorrect. Your hips may need to loosen and become soft while you tilt your pelvis forward a tiny amount, but your torso must stay long with your stomach pulled in to open your spine completely. The real Joseph Pilates Instructor teaches you how your held in belly allows you to strengthen while elongating your body. It's the way of a dancer and the way of a rider.



the external oblique muscles

Written by Betsy LaBelle

With the idea of helping Pony Clubbers understand the biomechanics of horse and rider better.  
Betsy finished as a Graduate B from North Star Pony Club.