

# Pelvic Floor Health For Women

## PELVIC HEALTH ISSUES: MORE COMMON THAN YOU THINK

While most people have heard the term pelvic floor, many don't realize what the pelvic floor does on a daily basis. Your pelvic floor is working daily, supporting your bladder, colon, rectum and sexual organs.

Weak or injured pelvic floor muscles can lead to urinary leakage, accidental bowel leakage, and pelvic organ prolapse, a condition in which the uterus, bladder and bowel may drop causing sense of pressure and fullness. If these muscles are too tight, it can be hard to relax, causing difficult bowel movements, incomplete bladder emptying, burning during urination, weak urinary stream, constipation, or pain when having intercourse.

## WHAT ARE PELVIC FLOOR DISORDERS?

Childbirth, menopause, obesity, diet, genetics, or overuse from recreational activities can weaken or damage the pelvic floor, causing:

- Incontinence: Loss of bladder or bowel control, leakage of urine or feces
- Prolapse: descent of pelvic organs noted as a bulge and/or pressure
- Emptying disorders: difficulty urinating or moving bowels
- Pain: discomfort in the lower back, pelvis, bladder, and/or urethra
- Overactive bladder: frequent need to void, bladder pressure, urgency, urge incontinence (difficulty holding back urine when having the urge to urinate)

## WHEN TO SEEK TREATMENT

More than 1/3 of all women have pelvic health issues, but few seek treatment, compromising their quality of life. Some people are at higher risk for pelvic floor disorders, such as those with connective tissue disorders, steroid dependence, multiple births, a history of pelvic radiations, pelvic surgery, and abdominal surgery. Everyone should undergo evaluation early to maintain good pelvic floor health.



## YOUR FIRST VISIT

The first visit will take approximately 60 minutes in a clean, private treatment room. A physical therapist who specializes in pelvic health will take your health history and perform an examination to determine the cause of your symptoms. Part of your examination may include an internal manual exam to most accurately assess your pelvic floor muscles. Your therapist will work with you to create a plan of care with treatments that may include:

- Pelvic Floor and Core Exercises
- Relaxation and Behavioral Techniques
- Manual Therapy
- Diet Education
- Function Training
- Bladder Diary

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