

PELVIC HEALTH

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"Our mission is to empower and educate women about the changes their bodies go through, and teach them how to reconnect on a neuromuscular level, and heal themselves in a way that allows them to optimize their function and restore their core foundation so they can return to their desired fitness levels safely and with better long term results."

Pelvic pain is pain felt in the lower abdomen (stomach area), pelvis, or perineum (the area between the rectum and the scrotum or vagina). It has many possible causes. Pelvic pain affects up to 20% of people in the United States, including women and men. It is more common in women. Pelvic pain is called chronic when it lasts for more than six months.

Physical therapists help people with pelvic pain restore strength, flexibility, and function to the muscles and joints in the pelvic region. They help people get back to their everyday activities.

Physical therapists are movement experts who improve quality of life through hands-on care, patient education, and prescribed movement. You can contact a Optimal Physical Therapy directly for an evaluation.

CAUSES

- Pregnancy and childbirth, which affect pelvic muscles and cause changes to pelvic joints.
- Pelvic joint problems from causes other than pregnancy and childbirth.
- Muscle weakness or imbalance within the muscles of the pelvic floor, trunk, or pelvis.
- Changes in the muscles that control the bowel and bladder.
- Tender areas in the muscles around the pelvis, abdomen (stomach area), low back, or groin areas.
- Pressure on one or more nerves in the pelvis.
- Weakness of the muscles around the pelvis, including the pelvic floor.
- Scar tissue after abdominal or pelvic surgery.
- Disease.
- A shift in the position of the pelvic organs, known as prolapse.

CONDITIONS TREATED

- Pregnant and postpartum women
- Diastasis Recti
- Incontinence / pelvic floor dysfunction
- Pubic Symphysis pain / hip pain and tightness
- Low back / mid back pain
- Post - Mastectomy
- Post Hysterectomy

HOW DOES IT FEEL?

The pain in your lower abdomen and pelvis may vary. Some people say it feels like an aching pain. Others describe it as a burning, sharp, or stabbing pain, or even like "pins and needles." You also may have:

- Pain in the hip or buttock.
- Pain in the tailbone or pubic bone.
- Pain in the joints of the pelvis.
- Tenderness in the muscles of the abdomen, low back, or buttock region.
- A sensation of heaviness in the pelvic region.
- A feeling that you are sitting on something hard, like a golf ball.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

With pelvic pain, you may experience:

- *Inability to sit for a long period.*
- *Reduced ability to move your hips or low back.*
- *Trouble walking, sleeping, or doing daily activities.*
- *Pain or numbness in the pelvic region with exercise or other activities, such as riding a bike or running.*
- *Pain during sexual activity.*
- *Urinary frequency, urgency, or incontinence, or pain during urination.*
- *Constipation, straining, or pain with bowel movements.*
- *Problems inserting tampons or with sexual penetration.*

Certified ??Pelvic?? Therapists
need info on that here + testimonial??

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

52% Female athletes experience incontinence

49% of Chronic low back pain patients have incontinence.

43%  experience sexual dysfunction or pain with intercourse

31% 

Statistics

Your physical therapist will review your medical history and perform a physical exam to identify the causes of your pelvic pain. They will look for any joint issues, muscle tightness or weakness, or nerve involvement. The exam may include:

- Pelvic-girdle (the basin-shaped bony structure that connects the spine to the legs) screening.
- Soft-tissue assessment.
- Visual exam of the tissues.
- Sensation testing.
- Internal assessment of pelvic-floor muscles.

Your physical therapist also may refer you to a doctor to help in your plan of care.

PELVIC FLOOR IN LIFE

The pelvic floor is a shorthand term for all the muscles, ligaments, nerves, and connective tissue that stretch across the pelvis. It's not just a clever name; the pelvic floor is actually the floor of your pelvis. Muscles there wrap from the tailbone and across the bony pelvis. It's an incredibly important area, connecting the upper and lower body, and has four major functions; you might not have ever thought about it before, but your pelvic floor is critical to your daily life.

- Sphincteric - The pelvic floor is what allows you to control when you use the bathroom. Throughout the day, your pelvic floor is squeezing to keep you continent, and must consciously relax in order to allow you to use the restroom.
- Supportive - It physically supports all of the organs in your pelvic cavity; you can think of the pelvic floor as a hammock for your bladder, vagina, uterus, prostate, and rectum. If these organs aren't supported they don't function properly, and can actually start to slide down into a pelvic organ prolapse.
- Stabilizing - The pelvic floor provides additional support for your lower back and pelvis. With nearly 80% of people having lower back problems, the pelvic floor has to come to the rescue, which puts more strain on the pelvis than it was designed for and causes dysfunction and pain.
- Sexual - Finally, the pelvic floor is responsible for sexual arousal, functioning, and orgasm in both genders. In women, the pelvic floor must expand to allow penetration of the vagina, and these muscles also assist with the positioning of the clitoris against the pubic bone to provide additional stimulation and to aid in female orgasm. In men, the pelvic floor helps to maintain erections and to bring about ejaculation during orgasm. The pelvic floor plays an important part in the complex mechanism of sexual pleasure and function in both genders.

HOW CAN A PHYSICAL THERAPIST HELP?

Based on their findings, your physical therapist will design a treatment program to meet your specific needs and goals. Your physical therapist may:

- Show you how to identify the appropriate muscles, such as the pelvic floor, deep abdominals, and diaphragm.
- Teach you how to use these muscles correctly. Your physical therapist can instruct you on the proper ways to do activities like:
 - Exercise.
 - Correcting your posture.
 - Getting up from a chair.
 - Squatting to pick up a child or an object from the floor.
- Work with you on exercises to stretch and strengthen the affected muscles. The goal is to help your muscles work together in the best way possible.
- Teach you the right pelvic-floor muscle exercises.
- Get you back to doing all of the activities you were able to do before your pelvic pain started.



Direct Access legislation

NO REFERRAL NEEDED

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