

Do You PEE When You SNEEZE?

This is called incontinence and many people assume it's a part of aging, especially if you've given birth. It doesn't have to be! The pelvic floor muscles go through a lot carrying a baby. They are also impacted by abdominal surgeries, the way we use the toilet, and even how we breathe.

Pelvic Floor Physical Therapists specialize in helping get your pelvic floor muscles (and others!) working the way you want them to.

COMMON REASONS TO SEE A PELVIC FLOOR PT

- Peeing or "leaking" with coughing, sneezing, laughing, jumping
- Pain or heaviness in the pelvic region
- Painful sex
- Feeling like your organs are "falling out"- this could include your uterus, bladder, or rectum
- Having to pee more than every 2 hours
- Leaking poop or constipation (can't poop!)
- Back, hip, or tailbone pain
- Separation in your abdominal muscles (Diastasis Recti)

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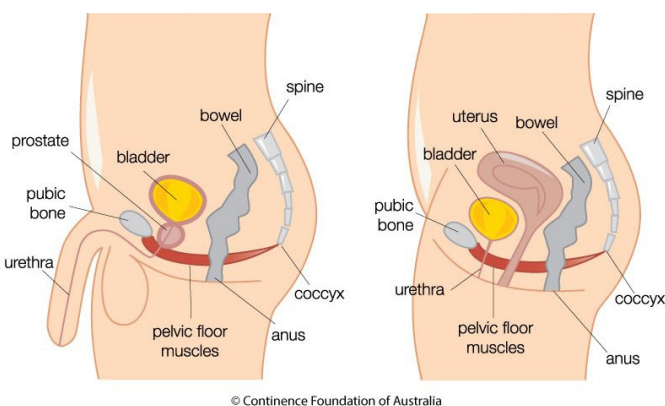
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WHAT IS THE PELVIC FLOOR?



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WHAT IS THE PELVIC FLOOR?

The pelvic floor is a group of muscles that make the "floor" of your pelvis. These are the muscles you use when holding or stopping pee, holding back gas, pooping, or having sex. The pelvic floor muscles make up what's known as the "core," along with your diaphragm and deep abdominal muscles.

EXERCISES FOR PELVIC HEALTH

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

While lying on your back or sitting comfortably, place one hand on your upper chest & one hand on your side ribs.

Slowly take a deep breath in and focus on trying to get your hand on your side ribs to move while the hand on your chest stays still. Slowly exhale. Repeat.

Imagine that there is a balloon from your ribcage to your hips, and as you breathe in it's expanding in all directions.

Repeat 5-10 minutes, 2-3 times per day.



DEEP ABDOMINAL BRACING

While lying on your back, draw your belly button up and in. Make sure to keep breathing and keep your upper abs relaxed. Place your fingers 2 inches inward from your hip bone so that you can feel the muscle contracting.

Repeat 10 times, holding up to 10 seconds. Keep breathing steadily.

As it gets easier, practice during daily activities.

SHOULD I DO KEGELS?

Many people have heard of Kegels, or pelvic floor contractions, but they're only half the story. Like all muscles, if our pelvic floor muscles are too tight, they won't work well. This can also cause pain, constipation, or difficulty getting all our pee out. A Pelvic Floor PT can help you figure out what's right for you!

HOW TO MOVE YOUR PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES

To use your pelvic floor muscles well, pay attention to how you breathe. Your diaphragm is a muscle inside the bottom of your ribcage. As you inhale, your lungs fill with air and your diaphragm flattens, expanding your lower ribcage. This moves your guts down and helps pelvic floor muscles lengthen.

As you exhale, your diaphragm rises and guts lift, and your pelvic floor can more easily contract.

When you're trying to feel your pelvic floor working for the first time, it's helpful to do it with your breath.

As you inhale, breathe into your lower ribs and hips and feel that expand your pelvic floor muscles. This is pelvic floor lengthening. As you exhale, lift in and up as if stopping the flow of pee or holding back gas. This is pelvic floor contraction.

Treatment is different for each person. If you're having pelvic floor issues, a Pelvic Floor PT can help!