



## Pelvic Floor Dysfunction

Our pelvic floor physical therapists have advanced training and extensive clinical experience in treatment of pelvic floor problems. We specialize in treating malalignments of the pelvis as this impacts how the pelvic floor is able to relax or contract correctly. If your muscular system is not balanced, function will be compromised and strain, pain and inflammation may ensue.

### Pelvic Floor Dysfunction may include:

- **Stress incontinence** - the loss of urine with cough, sneeze, lifting, exercise, etc. These symptoms are usually present with weakness of the pelvic floor muscles. In therapy we will work on pelvic alignment and retraining of the muscles using exercises and biofeedback.
- **Urge incontinence** - the loss of urine with a strong urge to urinate.  
Imbalance within your core muscles, increased muscular tension in your abdominal wall and pelvic floor, or a faulty breathing pattern may cause bladder instability and urgency. Therapy for this problem centers on realignment of your pelvis and ribcage and incorporating correct breathing mechanics. Treatment may include manual therapy, trunk stability exercises, relaxation and strengthening of the pelvic floor.
- **Frequency** - having to urinate more often than is accepted as normal (5-7 times a day). This can happen with or without incontinence. Treatment will focus on decreasing tension in the abdominal wall and pelvic floor muscles, correcting pelvic alignment, and teaching correct diaphragmatic breathing.
- **Pelvic floor pain** - this may include pain with intercourse, vulvar vestibulodynia or vulvadynia, interstitial cystitis, prostadynia, vaginismus, or levator ani syndrome, or pudendal neuralgia.

Each patient is unique in their symptoms and an individualized treatment program will be developed to address patient concerns and dysfunction. In order for the pelvic floor to function, contract and relax, we must first restore pelvic and ribcage position. Relaxation techniques, breathing exercises, and manual therapies may be used to help downtrain the pelvic floor and restore a healthy pelvic position. Once neutrality is



achieved we will focus on strengthening the abdominals and other supporting musculature that helps support the pelvic floor.

- **Coccygodynia** - pain at the tailbone with sitting.  
These symptoms are found when there is rotation and imbalance of the pelvic girdle and hip joints. Therapy will address these malalignment issues and promote balanced activity.
- **Pelvic floor prolapse** – symptoms of pain or pressure at the vaginal opening and a feeling of bulging of tissues.  
Prolapse occurs when there is laxity of the tissues holding organs in place. Breath holding and straining can contribute to these symptoms. Therapy will consist of teaching coordination of the pelvic floor muscles, abdominal wall, and respiratory diaphragm. Positions to lessen the prolapse and biomechanics to protect the pelvic floor will also be taught.

If you have further questions about what to expect or whether your problem is appropriate for physical therapy please feel free to call and talk to one of our pelvic floor therapists prior to your visit.

#### **What to expect for your first session:**

- Initial evaluation lasts one hour and includes a thorough subjective history as well as a complete biomechanical exam.
- The evaluation will include; assessment of your pelvic and ribcage alignment, muscular function, ROM, and assessment of breathing patterns.
- Evaluation may include a pelvic floor exam and use of surface EMG biofeedback to evaluate problems that are contributing to pain or weakness.
- A treatment plan for pain relief, education of how to manage your symptoms and exercises as appropriate will be instructed.

Further visits are 45 minutes in length. An individualized exercise program will be tailored to your symptoms and written instructions sent home with you. Further treatment may also include manual therapy, breathing and relaxation techniques, biofeedback, or modalities (electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat or cold) as needed.

Treatments are in private rooms with a warm, relaxing atmosphere. You are welcome to bring someone with you to your visit.