

## Did you know?

- 42% of women have urine incontinence during pregnancy  
(Kari Bø, Siv Mørkved 2000)
- 1 in 3 women have urine incontinence and 1 in 10 have fecal incontinence after childbirth  
(Hay-Smith et al. 2008)

## Remember:

- You should *not* leak urine, gas, or stool when you laugh, cough, sneeze, lift, jump or run.
- You should *not* have ongoing pelvic or back pain.
- You should *not* feel pressure or heaviness in your vagina or rectum.
- You should *not* have pain during intercourse.

## But if you do...we can help!

Even though pelvic floor challenges are common, they are treatable and you should not have to live with them. Pelvic health physiotherapy can help you regain control, maximize your function and recovery, and improve your well-being after childbirth. **An internal examination is required to treat all pelvic floor dysfunctions.**

Find a physiotherapist in your area:  
[www.physiotherapy.ca/Divisions/Womens-Health](http://www.physiotherapy.ca/Divisions/Womens-Health)



Prepared by the Pelvic Health Physiotherapists of Alberta (PHPA).

# Pelvic Health Physiotherapy: During Pregnancy and Beyond

Our goal is to empower women with the knowledge, guidance, and exercises needed to meet the challenges that pregnancy and childbirth may bring.

Although a natural event, recovering from pregnancy and birth may require some attention from you.

Knowing when to see a pelvic health physiotherapist can optimize your body's function and well-being. We will help guide you through this very important time of your life.



# Pre-Natal

Consult a pelvic health physiotherapist *during* pregnancy if you have:

- Pain in your pubic bone, groin, back, pelvis, buttocks, or legs
- Difficulties doing everyday tasks such as rolling over, walking, or getting in/out of a vehicle
- Leaking urine, gas, or stool when you laugh, cough, sneeze, or walk, etc.
- Bulging or tenting of your abdomen when you lift your head off a pillow (abdominal diastasis)
- Pain with intercourse
- Vaginal varicose veins
- Questions about preparing for labour & delivery

Pelvic health physiotherapy is an appropriate and meaningful compliment to your pre-natal care. Pregnancy is the best time to gain postural awareness and to learn the correct way of performing a pelvic floor contraction or “Kegel”. Prevent and treat incontinence, prolapse, and pain; learn ways to reduce injury to your pelvic floor during labour and delivery.



# Post-Partum

Consult a pelvic health physiotherapist *after* delivery if you have:

- Scarring from c-section, tearing, or episiotomy
- Leaking urine, gas, or stool when you cough, sneeze, exercise, etc. or not making it to the bathroom in time
- Problems emptying your bladder or bowel completely or frequently
- Pain with intercourse
- Pressure, heaviness, or bulging in your vagina or rectum
- Ongoing pain in your vagina, rectum, pelvis, pubic bone, abdomen, or low back
- Bulging or tenting of your abdomen during any exercise

Whether you have had a vaginal delivery or a caesarean section, you will benefit from pelvic health physiotherapy to help you recover from the many effects of pregnancy and delivery. Treatment for back or pelvic pain, incontinence, prolapse, or abdominal diastasis is particularly helpful after delivery as you adjust to caring for your new baby.

