

### Professional Care of:

- Musculoskeletal Injuries
- Back, pelvis & neck problems
- Sports Injuries
- Headaches
- Knee problems/ injuries
- Shoulder problems/ injuries
- Women's Health

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## TEWANTIN PHYSIOTHERAPY AND SPORTS INJURY CENTRE

# The Pelvic Floor

The "pelvic floor" refers to a group of muscles that attach to the front, back and sides of the pelvic bone and sacrum (the large fused bone at the bottom of your spine, just above the tailbone). Like a sling or hammock, these muscles support the organs in the pelvis, including the bladder, uterus or prostate, and rectum. They also wrap around your urethra, rectum, and vagina (in women).

Coordinated contracting and relaxing of these muscles controls bowel and bladder functions—the pelvic floor must relax to allow for urination, bowel movements and, in women, sexual intercourse. It is estimated that 1 in 4 women experience women's health problems during their lifetime. This includes problems with their pelvic floor. Many tolerate these problems, often for years, either too embarrassed to seek help or unaware that there are treatments available.

Pelvic Floor weakness occurs when the muscles and tissues supporting the organs (i.e. the pelvic floor) weaken. This can be caused by various issues including childbirth, aging, chronic cough, hormonal changes such as menopause, excessive straining due to constipation, constant lifting of heavy objects, obesity and pregnancy.

### So how can Physiotherapy help women tone and strengthen muscles in the pelvic area?

The Physio will design a treatment program specifically for you, based on your functional ability levels, aims and goals. Progress is regularly reviewed and treatment

programs are modified to help you achieve the best outcome possible.

- Regularly exercise the pelvic floor muscles, including exercises called "Pelvic Clocks" and "Kegels" to strengthen the muscles in the pelvic region. By carrying out a regular exercise program you can train your pelvic floor back to good health.
- Electrotherapeutic modalities such as ultrasound.
- Soft tissue manipulation.
- Advice on relaxing the muscles before strengthening the pelvic floor area is important.
- Maintaining good posture to keep pressure off your bladder and pelvic organs and using stretching or other techniques such as Pilates to avoid tightening and spasms in the other pelvic muscles.
- Avoid pushing or straining when urinating.
- Training in home exercise and therapy.
- Patient education.

**There's good evidence to show that strengthening your pelvic floor muscles and making some lifestyle changes can reduce or resolve symptoms of a pelvic floor weakness.**



## S-T-R-E-T-C-H Of The Month The Pelvic

1. Start by lying on the floor on your back with your feet together and your knees bent.
2. Place your arms on your sides and part your legs so that your feet are about a hip distance apart.
3. Take a deep breath and allow the air to travel all the way down to your pelvis. As you inhale, lift one leg up from the floor keeping the knee bent.
4. Even though your thigh muscles are also at work, your abdominal muscles should exert the most pressure.
5. Make sure your hips remain flat on the floor.
6. Return the foot on the floor as you exhale.
7. Do the exercise three times on each leg.



## TOWARDS WELLNESS Watching Television is a Health Risk!

It may be hard to believe that watching TV can damage our health, but there are many reasons that this is true. The obvious one is that time spent watching TV means less time spent doing physical activity. Many people watch over four hours of television a day, and that is frequently in addition to sitting at work for eight hours! The more the TV time, the fatter we are. Childhood TV watching is clearly linked to childhood obesity.

Weaning oneself and the kids off TV is tough, but when you do you have much more quality time with each other, improving family relationships. You will be healthier and happier, and the kids will be better adjusted socially.



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