

Women's Health Physical Therapy

Core, Pelvic Floor and More



By Mary Nalls, PT, MPT
Physical Therapy Your Way
& Advanced Specialty Care

Women's health physical therapy focuses on the unique needs of women throughout their life cycle. The school-aged girl who still wets the bed, the young woman with pelvic pain, the mother with abdominal separation after childbirth, the middle-aged woman who leaks urine when she runs, the elderly woman who worries if she can make it to the bathroom, all have one thing in common. All can benefit from the care of a women's health physical therapist.

These therapists are licensed professionals with a master's or doctorate degree in physical therapy and advanced training in treating disorders such as incontinence, abdominal muscle separation, pelvic organ prolapse, and pelvic pain.

Urinary Incontinence

Urinary incontinence is the involuntary leakage of urine. It affects over 13 million Americans. Half of these are middle-aged women. Another large percentage are female athletes. There are several types of urinary incontinence:

- **Stress Urinary Incontinence:** Leakage of urine that occurs during coughing, sneezing, laughing, exercise, and lifting.
- **Urge Urinary Incontinence:** Also known as overactive bladder, the leakage of urine associated with a strong urge to urinate. Those with this condition often leak upon hearing running water, or while rushing to the toilet.
- **Pediatric Incontinence:** Most children are potty trained by age 4. However, some children develop persistent problems that may include bedwetting, daytime incontinence, urinary frequency, pelvic pain, and constipation.

Pelvic Pain

Pelvic pain can present itself as vaginal, rectal, or perineal pain during

sitting, sexual intercourse, urination, and more. This pain may be from various sources such as lower back dysfunction, pubic symphysis separation, adhered scars, visceral restriction, vaginal tears, hormonal imbalance, abuse, or prolonged pelvic muscle spasms such as in levator ani syndrome.

Pelvic Prolapse

When the muscles and ligaments of the pelvis get weakened and stretched from pregnancy, constipation, and other conditions, the pelvic organs (bladder, uterus or rectum) drop from the lower abdomen into the walls of the vagina. Patients with prolapse complain of a

bulge or heaviness in their vagina.

Pregnancy and Postpartum Conditions

During and after pregnancy, it is common for women to experience back, coccyx, or pelvic pain, to leak urine, or to have separation of the abdominal wall known as diastasis recti. These conditions should be treated, as they respond well to therapy and often do not correct themselves. In fact, 76.4% of women with incontinence at 3-months postpartum report persistent incontinence 12 years later. For those who ignore the pelvic pain associated with pregnancy, 30% become chronic

pelvic pain sufferers later in life.

What To Expect During Therapy

A women's health physical therapist will provide a thorough evaluation and develop an individualized treatment program specific to your problems and functional goals. Treatments will include a combination of hands-on manual therapy, functional activity, bladder and bowel training, posture correction, and muscle strength and coordination training. Look for a therapist who listens to you, understands your goals, and creates an individualized plan to meet your specific needs.



**Do you have
PELVIC PAIN
OR BLADDER
CONTROL ISSUES?**

**Physical Therapy Your Way
& Advanced Specialty Care**

offers conservative solutions to pelvic floor disorders.

Begin your road to recovery
by scheduling an evaluation today!

Managing Director:
MaryNalls, PT, MPT

Alexandria & Lorton, VA
571-312-6966

Full Hour 1-on-1 Care!

- Incontinence
- Pelvic Pain
- Pediatric Bed-Wetting
- Constipation
- Post Partum Check Up
- Dizziness-Vertigo
- Headaches, TMJ and Neck Pain



**PHYSICAL THERAPY
YOUR WAY**
ADVANCED SPECIALTY CARE

www.PhysicalTherapyYourWay.net