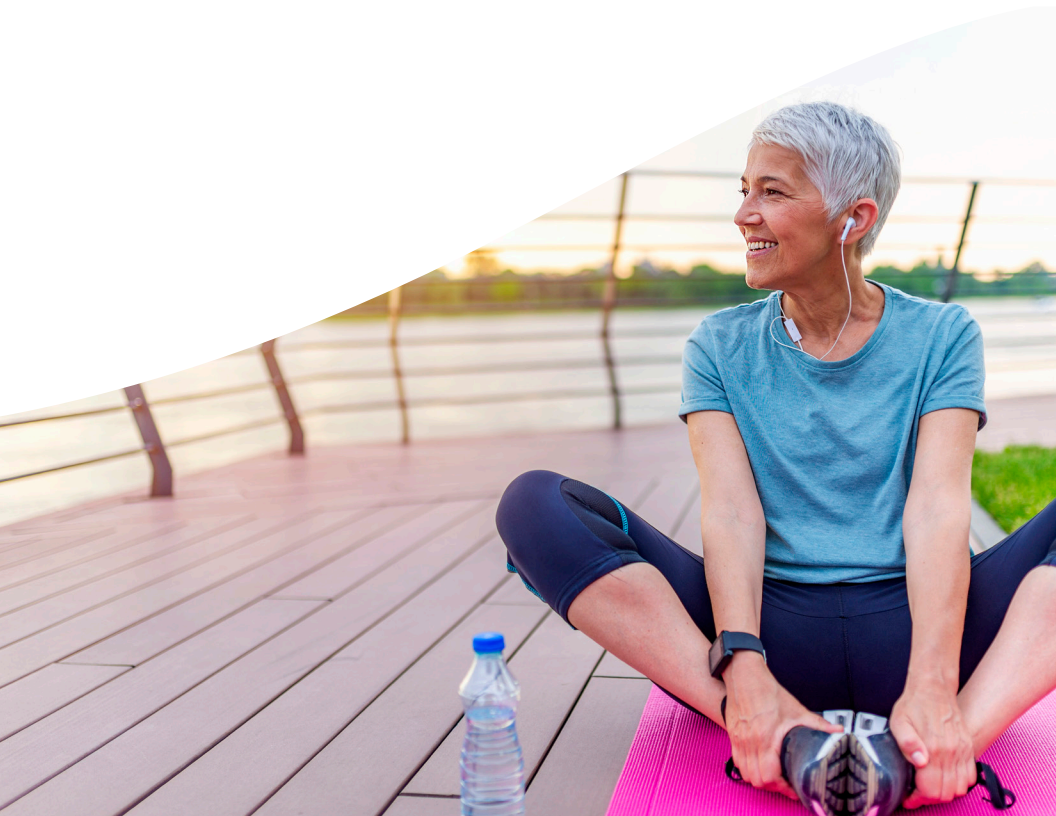


A Patient's Guide

What to Expect during
Pelvic Health Physical Therapy





Pelvic conditions are a sensitive matter for many people. Cultural and societal norms cause many of us to feel reluctant to address issues concerning this aspect of health.

Your physical therapist understands pelvic conditions are personal in nature and will make sure that your comfort and dignity are a top priority.

We want to make sure that your questions are answered about pelvic health physical therapy and the techniques offered. You will always be asked for your consent and understanding when choosing which examination and treatment techniques are included in your care.

This document is only a starting point. We encourage you to talk openly with your pelvic health physical therapist about any questions or concerns you may have.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is pelvic health physical therapy?

Pelvic health physical therapy is a conservative approach to treat pelvic floor dysfunction. This includes bowel, bladder and sexual dysfunctions as well as chronic pelvic, low back and hip pain. The pelvic floor muscle group sits internally like a sling within the pelvis and provides pelvic organ support and stability. It may be beneficial for your pelvic health physical therapist to assess these muscles to rule in or rule out the source of pelvic issues.

What if I am not comfortable with certain exam and treatment techniques?

You are in full control of your care and which techniques might be used based on your comfort. Your physical therapist will be knowledgeable about a wide variety of treatment options to help you choose the best ones for you.

What should I expect during a pelvic examination and/or treatment?

Your physical therapist will evaluate your medical condition and explain possible examination and treatment options that would be best for you. They will ensure that you feel comfortable with any proposed treatments and only proceed with your consent.

- » The therapist may ask to visually inspect the area of concern.
- » The therapist may ask to use their gloved hands to examine and provide treatment to your body.
- » Your physical therapist will ensure your comfort throughout the examination and treatment.

Your questions are always welcome. This is your opportunity to connect things you have read or heard with medically sound information based on your unique medical history. Don't hesitate to ask anything that comes to mind.

How should I prepare for a pelvic examination or treatment?

Arrive as you are every day. The normal condition of your body and skin is informative for your therapist, and should match your daily life. If you have a menstrual cycle, you can attend your appointment during any phase of your cycle; this is a normal human body condition and treatment can be adjusted based on your comfort.

How is my privacy maintained?

Our clinics have specific rooms with additional privacy measures to protect you and your health information. As with any medical procedure, your health history and information is kept private and is accessible only by your designated team of providers.

Am I allowed to bring a support person (significant other, family member, etc.)?

A support person of the patient's choice is allowed at any appointment.

Can I request a medical chaperone?

A medical chaperone from the clinic can be provided upon request for examination and treatment. If a chaperone is not available, any portion of the exam or treatment deemed to be sensitive can be deferred or delayed for that specific session.

What kind of things does my physical therapist need to know?

Your therapist will base questions and examination on your diagnosis and the details you choose to share about your personal history. Please know that a medical treatment room is a safe place to give honest information, and no information is "too much." It is important for your physical therapist to know if you have a history of trauma or abuse. This helps them avoid emotional or physical triggers during their care for you.

Why do physical therapists choose to specialize in this kind of area?

Physical therapists specialize in muscles and physical function. The pelvic floor is an intricate system of muscles, and their coordination with each other and the surrounding low back, hips, and other internal organs of the body can be addressed by physical therapy techniques such as strengthening, stretching, relaxation, and mobilization.

- Physical therapists that specialize in pelvic health often see the significant positive impact they are able to make in the quality of life of their patients, who may struggle with sensitive conditions.



- Specialized services such as pelvic health physical therapy require additional training, and your pelvic health physical therapist will have completed extensive study and coursework to specialize in treating individuals with pelvic health conditions. Quite often a provider will have had personal or family experience with a condition related to an area they specialize in. They may have had a mentor who sparked their interest. This is a frequently asked question, please feel welcome to ask your therapist if you feel curious about their particular background or interest.

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