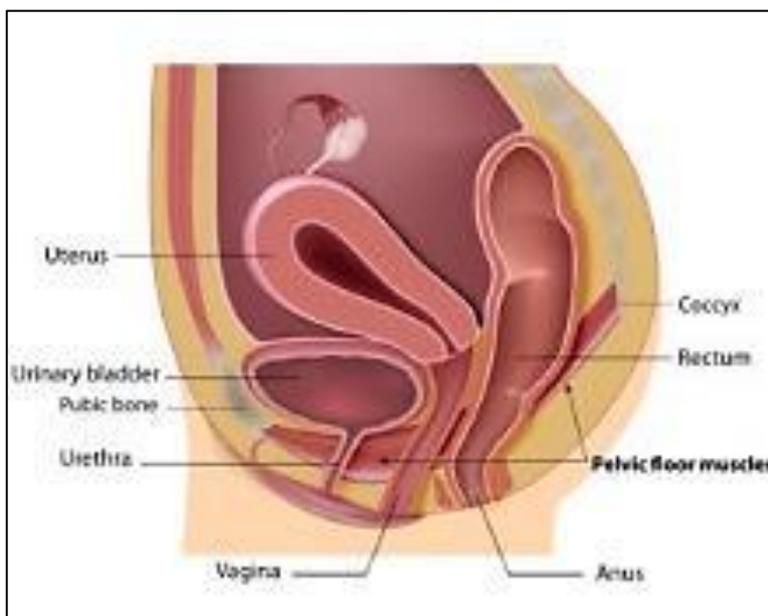


Pelvic floor and Core connection breath

QUICK LINK: [See this video for demo of the core connection breath](#)

Pelvic floor muscle function is affected by numerous phases of a ladies life; pregnancy, birth, ageing, nutrition, stress, hormones and exercise just to name a few.

The pelvic floor muscles are the group of muscles and connective tissues that lie within your pelvis that support your internal organs; bladder, uterus and bowel. This means stop these organs literally falling out of your body and they contract/relax appropriately to control your toileting habits.



Dysfunction (due to damage from pregnancy, birth, surgery etc) of these muscles

is not normal. Pelvic floor dysfunction may lead to poor control of toileting habits or reduced ability to maintain organs within their appropriate places ie prolapse.

Pelvic floor muscle function is affected by a variety of movements throughout the body, they are part of your 'core system'. They may respond differently when loads are placed on the body in different way, ie lifting something heavy, lifting or holding your baby or pram. Changes in pressure just during breathing patterns effect your pelvic floor also, ie breathing in, flattens the diaphragm at the top of your stomach, increasing the pressure in the abdomen causing pressure to be placed on the pelvic floor muscles.

General activity is a constant activator of pelvic floor muscles which is a good thing as it is activating muscles which always helps strengthen any muscle.

Isolated Pelvic floor exercises are recommended during pregnancy to maintain strength of these muscles as your baby grows and also help rehabilitation after pregnancy.

ENERGISED

PERSONAL - TRAINING

I recommend performing three sets of eight pelvic floor contractions daily following these steps:

1. Sit or stand yourself in optimal alignment with your shoulders and ribs stacked in line on top of your hips. Position your pelvis in neutral alignment, not tilted to far forward or back at the top.
2. Focus on your breathing next, place one hand on the base of your ribs and the other on your stomach, breath into your hands imagine you are inflating into your hands and right down into your pelvic floor. (Relaxing your pelvic floor muscles is just as important as being able to effectively contract them, without leaking). Focus on inflating and deflating for a few breaths.
3. Now on the exhale breath pick up your pelvic floor, imagine you are stopping yourself from going to the toilet. Practise inhaling and inflating your core and exhaling and contracting your pelvic floor. Others cues to contract your pelvic floor maybe: imagine picking up a tissue or raison with your vagina, or holding in a tampon.

By incorporating effective breathing techniques into your movements, training or exercise, less pressure will be placed on your pelvic floor therefore reducing the risk of dysfunction or helping to heal any dysfunctions.

Furthermore to complete your connection breath, add in the contraction of your deep abdominal muscles with your contraction of your pelvic floor:

4. Place your index and middle fingers together just above your hip bones and gently feel deep into your core. On your exhale breath you are going to contract your deep core muscles (transverse abdominals), to do this imagine you have a line of string between your hip bones and you are going to tighten the tension on that line and *gently* pull in your belly button. You shouldn't see any major movement from the outside and you should be able to feel a tension deep in your core under your fingers.

This completes how to do a core connection breath and is the foundation on which to build most loaded movements or exercises on to best support your core and pelvic floor for optimal functioning for the rest of your life.

[See this video for demo of the core connection breath](#)