

PREGNANCY AND BEYOND

How a Pelvic Health Physiotherapist can support on the journey of pregnancy and postpartum.



A Pelvic Health Physiotherapist (PT) is a Registered Regulated Health Care Provider who has taken extensive post graduate courses in pelvic health. At EPA and GWAH our Pelvic Health team has experience treating general orthopaedic complaints like: low back pain, sacroiliac joint pain and hip pain. This combination brings incredible support to our clients and their health care.

YOUR PELVIC PHYSIOTHERAPY CHECKLIST

Bodies change and adapt during each stage of pregnancy. A Pelvic Health Physiotherapist can assist you and your team with each stage.

DURING PREGNANCY

EXERCISE CONSIDERATIONS

- Exercise during pregnancy is crucial. **Pelvic Health Physiotherapists** can recommend individual exercise programs for clients

PELVIC FLOOR STRENGTHENING – to Kegel or not to Kegel?

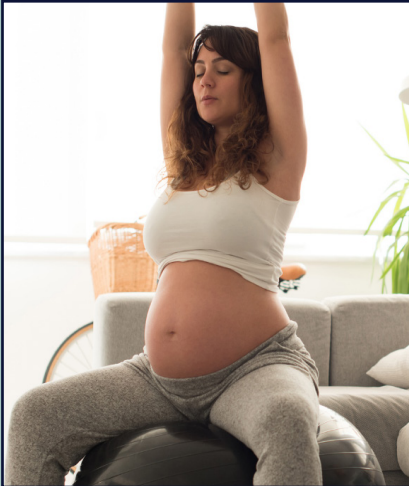
- Check the resting state of pelvic floor over active vs. under active
- Check the effectiveness of the pelvic floor to **contract & relax**
- Helps reduce incontinence and prolapse symptoms and manage low back/pelvic girdle pain during pregnancy

LOW BACK & PELVIC GIRDLE (Sacroiliac and Pubic Bone) PAIN

- Begins as early as the 1st trimester but is more common during the 2nd and 3rd trimester and often worsens with each subsequent pregnancy.
- Pelvic Health PTs can help reduce pain and increase comfort during pregnancy. An emphasis is placed on real life tasks such as: sitting, transitioning from sit to stand, rolling in bed, lifting & more.

LABOUR & BIRTHING PREPARATIONS

- In the last trimester (7 to 9 months), clients often get very concerned about their pelvic floor/vaginal opening's ability to stretch enough to deliver their baby. A physiotherapist will educate and teach how to **RELAX** and **CONTRACT** their pelvic floor to prepare for **LABOUR** and **DELIVERY**
- Education and practical application of comfort measures likes **TENS**, **PEANUT** balls and applying external pressure to the pelvis to assist baby's transition through the pelvis during labour
- Education and instruction on **PERINEAL** massage to prepare for vaginal delivery and potentially reduce perineal trauma



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Guelph Women's Health: 519-780-0606

Orangeville: 519-940-8993

POSTPARTUM

0-6 WEEKS POSTPARTUM

- Brings about many challenges, including neck, thoracic/low back and/or wrist pain from caring for the new baby while still recovering from labour and delivery
- Pelvic PTs can help with musculoskeletal concerns and educate about body position/posture with nursing, holding and lifting the baby and various carriers.
- PTs can help with education about the Do's and Don'ts of returning to pre-pregnancy activities to quickly
- Visit can be done in-person or virtually (client preference)

PELVIC HEALTH ASSESSMENT

- Internal vaginal/rectal assessment to evaluate tension and strength of the pelvic floor at 6 weeks postpartum
- Assess for pelvic organ prolapse, diastasis rectus abdominus and address any residual or new low back/pelvic girdle pain
- Education and progressive pelvic floor training can give confidence to those who are suffering from prolapse and urinary/fecal incontinence
- When is it safe to resume exercise? Using return to exercise guidelines, physiotherapists can confidently help women return to the correct intensity/level of exercise. This eliminates the “blanket” approach.

NURSING CONCERNS

- Careful assessment of latch position, consideration of TONGUE TIED infants, nursing positions, hydration assessment and blocked duct/mastitis management

INFANT TORTICOLLIS

- Torticollis can develop for a variety of reasons, with one of the most common being the baby's position while in the uterus
- PTs can educate about positions and activities to practice so that baby moves and stretches the tight muscles

Please consider referring to your local Pelvic Health Physiotherapists during Pregnancy and the postpartum period. Physiotherapists can help empower patients, while making them feel comfortable and confident with their ever-changing bodies.

