

# 5 Tips For A Healthy Pelvic Floor

Though a general fitness regime is good for you, pelvic floor exercises are particularly beneficial in helping improve bladder and bowel control, and can reduce or stop leakage of urine and bowel motions. Like other muscles, the pelvic floor muscles become stronger with a regular exercise program. Pelvic floor muscle exercises are important for both men and women.



## Technique is everything

Research shows that 50% of women and 30% of men don't know how to correctly contract their pelvic floor muscles. Many people use a technique that could make their problem worse. This is a waste of time and very frustrating. Ensuring you have the right technique is the foundation for a successful outcome with pelvic floor exercises.



## Relax & Let Go

Most people assume all pelvic floor problems are due to muscle weakness. However, some people have difficulty relaxing their pelvic floor and this can lead to problems such as bladder and bowel emptying and pelvic and sexual pain. It's important for a healthy pelvic floor to be able to both contract AND relax fully. Make sure you focus on letting go at the end of each contraction.





## Just Do It!

With good instruction, pelvic floor exercises are not hard to do or time consuming. The biggest barrier is remembering to do them! How well you achieve your goals relies on how regularly you do them! The right time to do them will be different for everybody, so you need to think about what will work for you. At any stage in your life, doing pelvic floor exercises should be a part of your daily routine. Even if you don't have symptoms, this will help guard against the normal effects of aging.



## Train Your Brain

It's not enough to do pelvic floor exercises and then forget about your pelvic floor for the remainder of the day! It's also important to train your brain to switch on these muscles when you need them. So don't forget to tighten the pelvic floor when you lift, cough, laugh, sneeze or urgently need to urinate.



## Take the Pressure Off

Some activities and lifestyle factors can place additional strain on your pelvic floor. These include constipation and straining to empty your bowels, heavy lifting, a chronic cough, excessive high impact exercise and being overweight. Paying attention to good bowel habits, getting help for a persistent cough, minimising heavy lifting, choosing appropriate exercise and maintaining a healthy weight will all help you get the best out of your pelvic floor muscles.



A healthy pelvic floor contributes to good pelvic health and an overall improvement in your quality of life. Most of us know that doing pelvic floor exercises is beneficial however these deceptively simple exercises can be more difficult than you think. At Life Physio, our specifically trained Women's Health & Pelvic Physiotherapist provides personalised care by tailoring a pelvic health program that works for you and your lifestyle.

If you would like to prevent or treat bladder, bowel and prolapse problems, pelvic and sexual pain or the discomforts of pregnancy, please call us on **03 9449 5100**.