

## Rehabilitation services now accepting referrals

### Pelvic health physical therapy

Most people are unaware that some physical therapists specialize in treating conditions like urinary and fecal incontinence, male and female pelvic pain, and pelvic floor muscle injury. Our physical therapists have advanced training in specific anatomy and treatment related to female and male pelvises.



Our **UCLA Outpatient Rehabilitation Services** pelvic floor specialists will conduct a comprehensive evaluation and create a personalized treatment plan to improve your overall bladder, bowel and sexual function. Women, specifically, may experience pelvic floor muscle injury associated with pregnancy, childbirth, aging, surgery or illness.

### Patients may benefit from pelvic floor rehab if they are experiencing:



- Prepartum and postpartum related issues including back pain, diastasis recti, sciatica and deconditioning
- Scar tissue concerns including a Cesarean section or perineal tears
- Accidental leakage of urine when coughing, sneezing or laughing
- Frequent urination and sudden, uncontrollable urges to urinate
- Pain in the pelvic region, including during sexual intercourse
- Fecal incontinence
- Pelvic organ prolapse
- Sexual dysfunction
- Constipation
- Vulvar pain
- Prostatitis/chronic pelvic pain
- Cancer of the pelvic region
- Testicular/perineal pain
- Rectal/anal pain
- Coccyx/tailbone pain

# Treatment and outcomes

The rehabilitation services used to treat pelvic floor disorders include:



**Kegel exercises:** Training to perform Kegel exercises (pelvic floor muscle contraction) properly will boost the strength and endurance of the pelvic floor muscles.

**Core strengthening:** Developing optimal power and control of the core muscles is vital to the ability of the pelvic floor muscles to support organs.

**Bladder diaries:** Tracking food and fluid intake as well as urine output may determine possible dietary triggers and abnormal bladder patterns.

**Pelvic floor stretching:** Acquiring skills to properly stretch pelvic floor muscles and pelvic muscles may normalize muscle tone.

**Relaxation techniques:** Retraining the pelvic floor muscles to relax may significantly reduce excessive tension that contributes to urinary leakage, constipation and pain during sexual intercourse.

**Bladder retraining:** Learning to suppress the urge to urinate may help those who use the bathroom more than once a night or who urinate more than 5 to 7 times per day.

**Biofeedback:** Determining the activity of pelvic floor muscles using a wireless sensor externally may help retrain pelvic floor muscles at rest and during contractions.

**Diaphragm breathing:** Performing deep belly or abdominal breathing can improve coordination during daily movement patterns, decrease pelvic floor pain by facilitating pelvic floor muscle relaxation, improve bladder and bowel emptying, and reduce stress and anxiety.

**Abdominal wall massage:** Increasing the mobility of the abdominal wall may decrease bothersome symptoms related to abdominal and pelvic pain.

**Vaginal dilator therapy:** Medical graduated dilators can be beneficial for patients who have pain with penetration during sexual activity, tampon use and during gynecological exams.

**Posture education:** Correcting movement and promoting better posture can help support a healthy core.

**External and internal manual therapy:** This therapy addresses weakness or restrictions of pelvic floor muscles as well as the muscles of the hip, abdominal wall, lower back and internal organs.

**Trigger point release:** Releasing trigger points that refer symptoms to surrounding areas due to muscle spasms of the pelvic floor region can reduce pain.

**Visceral mobilization:** Minimizing restrictions between the organs can improve the overall function of the pelvic and abdominal organs.

**Patient education:** Understanding the anatomy and physiology specific to a patient's condition empowers them to manage bothersome symptoms related to bladder, bowel and sexual function.

**Contact any of your treating physicians for a referral to schedule your physical therapy evaluation.**

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