

Treatment in patients with pelvic floor dysfunction

Advice Centre for Pelvic Floor Dysfunction

About us

The department of Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine 2nd Faculty of Medicine, Charles University in Prague and Motol University Hospital, Advice Centre for Pelvic Floor Dysfunctions specializes in helping women after delivery injuries, patients with pelvic pain (painful menstruation, deep pelvic pain, endometriosis, vaginismus, neuralgia n. pudendus), neurological patients with urinary and faecal incontinence, patients after prostatectomy, gynecologic and proctologic surgery. We also treat children with pelvic floor dysfunction.

Urinary/faecal incontinence

Urinary/faecal incontinence has 3 basic types.

Stress incontinence – weakness of pelvic floor muscles, leakage during cough, jumping, weight bearing.

Urgency incontinence – feeling of urge to voiding/stool, without delay, symptom of OAB.

Mixed incontinence – combined symptoms of previous types.

Recommended exercises:

✓ Lift your pelvic floor muscles (PFM) up to your abdomen, as the flower curls in the bud (woman), like you want to shorten the penis (man). Squeeze gently the sphincters of urethra and anus as if you want to interrupt urination/defecation.

Exercise lifting and squeezing of PFM in variable position (lying, sitting, standing etc.). Try to squeeze and elevate muscles step by step up to 50 or more short repetitions (during days) for power training.

Try to squeeze and elevate muscles for 5 seconds 5 – 10x for endurance training. Try to squeeze and elevate muscles step by step up to 20 seconds. Use only 60% of your maximal voluntary contraction.

It's necessary to relax the muscles between each contraction!

- ✓ Squeeze and lift PFM before stress manoeuvres (cough, jumping, weight bearing).
- ✓ Squeeze and lift PFM during strong urge in order to minimize urgency and leakage of urine/stool (bladder/bowel drill). Urinate at regular intervals. Avoid sour and carbonated drink.
- ✓ Suitable water intake is 35ml/kg body weight/day. Do not drink in the evening (2 - 3hours before sleeping) to minimize nocturnal micturition. Well-balanced diet is recommended.
- ✓ Regular physical activity is recommended.
- ✗ Do not interrupt the urine flow during micturition.
- ✗ Breathe fluently.
- ✗ Do not contract buttock, thigh, belly muscles instead of PFM.
- ✗ Avoid sour and carbonated drink.

If your symptoms persist, visit your doctor!

Deep pelvic pain

Painful conditions include painful period, coccyx pain, painful intercourse, endometriosis.

Deep pelvic pain is often caused by spasm of pelvic floor muscles (PFM). The cramps of PFM look like weakness of those muscles and lots of people strengthen and overload them. In this case first RELAXED and STRETCH the PFM, then strengthen them.

Recommended exercises:

- ✓ Sit down on the chair. Put rolled towel on the top of the chair between your sitting bones. Let's squeeze and elevate your PFM, then try to relax your pelvic floor down to the towel and your sitting bones at the sides. Exercise for at least a minute.
- ✓ Lay on your back, put your palms on the lower belly. Breathe very gently under your hands and into the pelvic floor. Try to relax your PFM and release tension in your pelvis. Exercise for at least a minute.
- ✓ Lay on your belly, relax your legs, head is placed on the forehead or cheek. Put your palms to the buttock. Squeeze and elevate PFM, hold it for 10 seconds and then relax muscles, spread the buttock gently out of the anus. You can repeat it 1 – 2x.
- ✓ Stretch your low back and hips (see handout „Cvičební sestava na funkční sterilitu a dysfunkce v oblasti pánevního dna“).
- ✓ If you have a scars in the belly or perineum, massage them with your fingers by gentle circular movements by gently stretching them (see handout „Péče o jizvu“).
- ✗ Do not push the PFM out. Never!

If your symptoms persist, visit your gynecologist or physiotherapist! If you have painful urination, visit your doctor before exercise.

Weakness, pelvic organ prolaps

Weakness of pelvic floor muscles (PFM) is often caused by difficult labour, being overweight or long-term carrying of heavy weights.

Recommended exercises:

- ✓ Lift your PFM up to your abdomen, as the flower curls in the bud (woman), like you want to shorten the penis (man). Squeeze gently the sphincters of urethra and anus as if you want to interrupt urination/defecation.
- ✓ Let's exercise lifting and squeezing of PFM in variable position (lying, sitting, standing etc.) 5 times a day. Let's try to squeeze and elevate muscles step by step up to 50 short repetitions (during days) or try to contract muscles up to 20s. You can use vaginal cones or weights (Kegel, Aquaflex etc.) for strengthening.
- ✓ It's necessary to relax the muscles between each contraction.
- ✓ Lay on your back, if you feel pelvic organ prolaps. You can put a pillow under your buttock.
- ✓ Squeeze and lift PFM before weight bearing.

- ✗ Do not interrupt the urine flow during micturition.
- ✗ Breathe fluently.
- ✗ Do not contract buttock, thigh, belly muscles instead of PFM.
- ✗ Avoid sitting in deep squat position for a long time.
- ✗ Avoid lifting any heavy weight.

If your symptoms persist, visit gynecologist, uro-gynecologist!

Constipation

There are variable causes of constipation. Bad diet, sedentary job, tight clothes, hypertonic pelvic floor muscles (PFM) and some diseases.

Recommended exercises:

- ✓ Massage your belly at least once a day to improve peristalsis. For this special massage use 2 circles. Firstly: put your palm under your lower left ribs, go to the lower right ribs, then to the bellybutton and back to left ribs. Secondly: put your palm to the lower right belly next to groin, go up to bellybutton, then to the left groin and back to your right side. Let's massage gently, slowly, with or without body oil. Make 10 repetitions for each circle, altogether 20 circles.
- ✓ Let's bend your trunk, completely relax your PFM and then gently press to the rectum during evacuation of the stool. You can put small chair under your foot for better relaxation of PFM.
- ✓ Let's exercises relaxations for PFM (see deep pelvic pain).
- ✓ Eat a well-balanced diet regularly. Recommended fluid intake is 35ml/kg each day, fiber intake is 10 – 20 g per day.
- ✓ Do regular physical activity – e. g. brisk walking
- ✗ Do not wear tight clothes or a tight belt.
- ✗ Avoid pressing your stool without enough relaxation of PFM. This bad habit often causes haemorrhoids or wounds in the anus.

If your symptoms persist, visit gastroenterology!

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