

What is your
pelvic floor?

self-care tips

PELVIC HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY

when to
seek help

pelvic floor
exercises

Anyone who is pregnant can be affected by pelvic floor health problems. Help and support is available for you. Speak to your healthcare provider or visit www.eoemskservice.nhs.uk

During pregnancy your body goes through many changes to help you grow, carry and birth your baby. It can sometimes be difficult to know what are normal changes, and when you should seek help. Changes can happen to your bladder, bowel, vagina and sexual health as your pelvic floor muscles come under more pressure.

The information in this leaflet will give you self-help tips to manage these changes. It will also provide advice on when, where and why to seek help if anything worries you or does not resolve.

What are pelvic floor muscles?

These are a group of muscles that span the outlet of your pelvis. Pelvic floor muscles have the following uses:

- They help you to control wee, wind and poo
- They act like a hammock to support your pelvic organs (bladder, womb and bowel) and keep them in the correct position
- They can help improve sex by increasing your sensation, your grip and orgasm
- They help to keep your pelvis and hips stable

Anyone who is pregnant can be affected by pelvic floor dysfunction. This is when the pelvic floor muscles are not working correctly.

Don't ignore your pelvic floor

Scan the QR Code to find out how to do these exercises:



Pelvic floor exercises

It is recommended to do daily pelvic floor exercises during pregnancy and after birth. This will help prevent symptoms of pelvic floor dysfunction such as bladder and bowel leakage or prolapse.

Healthy bladder & bowel

Having a healthy bladder and bowel can help you a void pelvic floor problems.

Self care-tips:

- Try and drink 6-8 glasses of water a day. If you don't drink enough, your poo can become difficult to pass
- Avoid caffeine. It can increase your blood pressure and heart rate, and also increase the urgency and number of times that you will need to wee
- When weeing give your bladder time to empty
- Try and cut out 'just in case wees', aiming for going every 2-3 hours. This will help keep your bladder able to 'hold' for longer periods of time
- Don't strain when you poo, this can weaken the pelvic floor muscles further. If you are finding your poo is difficult to pass, discuss treatment options with your health professional

When to seek help...

If you experience any of the following, we advise that you seek help:

- Urinary incontinence (leaking wee)
- Overactive bladder (urgency to go to the toilet often)
- Bulge in the vagina, or a heavy dragging sensation (this could be a prolapse, a descent of one or more of the pelvic organs into the vagina)
- Anal incontinence (accidentally pooing yourself or leaking wind)
- Problems with sex, such as having pain or reduced sensation

Need more information?

Scan the below QR codes! These take you to websites providing pelvic health advice and information related to pregnancy and after having a baby.



Dynamic health
physio services -
Cambridgeshire



Peterborough City
Hospital



Cambridge
University Hospitals