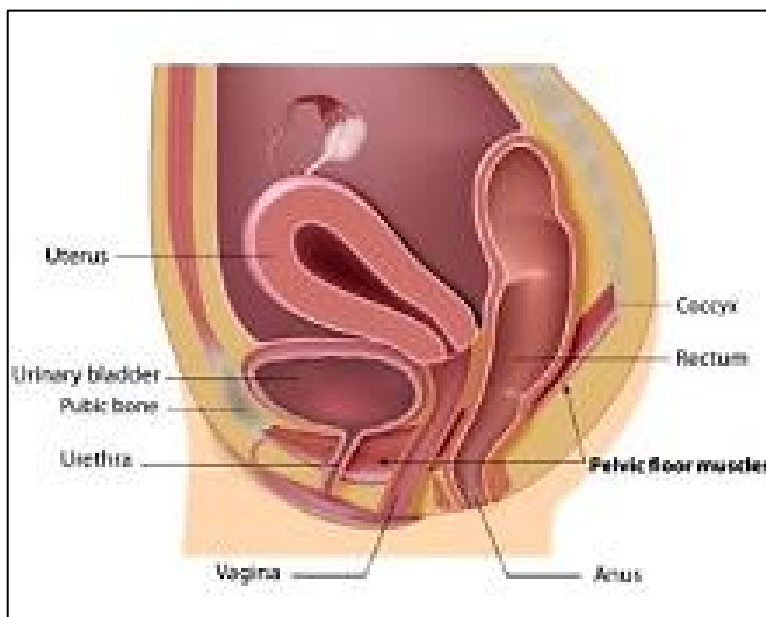


Pelvic floor and Core connection breath

QUICK LINK: [See this video for demo of the core connection breath](#)

Pelvic floor muscle function is affected by numerous phases of a ladies life; pregnancy, birth, ageing, nutrition, stress, hormones and exercise just to name a few.

The pelvic floor muscles are the group of muscles and connective tissues that lie within your pelvis that support your internal organs; bladder, uterus and bowel. This means they stop these organs literally falling out of your body and they contract/relax appropriately to control your toileting habits.



Dysfunction (due to damage from pregnancy, birth, surgery, aging, heavy lifting etc) of these muscles is not normal. Pelvic floor dysfunction may lead to poor control of toileting habits or reduced ability to maintain organs within their appropriate places ie prolapse.

Pelvic floor muscle function is affected by a variety of movements throughout the body, they are part of your 'core system'. They may respond differently when loads are placed on the body in different way, ie lifting something heavy, lifting or holding your baby or pram. Changes in pressure just during breathing patterns effect your pelvic floor also, ie breathing in, flattens the diaphragm at the top of your stomach, increasing the pressure in the abdomen causing pressure to be placed on the pelvic floor muscles.

General activity is a constant activator of pelvic floor muscles which is a good thing as it is activating muscles which always helps strengthen any muscle.

Isolated Pelvic floor exercises are ok, but incorporating these pelvic floor exercises with your breathing and your movements/exercises call the connection breath will have so much more benefit. It is recommended during pregnancy to regularly do these exercises to maintain strength of these muscles as your baby grows and also help will your rehabilitation after pregnancy. For more information on how to effectively look after your core and pelvic

floor during pregnancy or rehabilitate it afterwards check out my online programs or contact me to book an in person consultation with me to see how I can help.

I recommend performing three sets of eight to ten pelvic floor contractions daily following these steps:

1. Sit or stand yourself in optimal alignment with your shoulders and ribs stacked on top of your hips. Position your pelvis in neutral alignment, not tilted to far forward or back at the top.
2. Focus on your breathing next, place one hand on the base of your ribs with fingers at the front and your thumb around the back and the other on your lower stomach, breath into your hands imagine you are inflating into your hands and right down into your pelvis and pelvic floor. (Relaxing your pelvic floor muscles is just as important as being able to effectively contract them, without leaking). Focus on inflating and deflating for a few breaths.
3. Now on the exhale breath pick up your pelvic floor, imagine you are stopping yourself from going to the toilet being sure to squeeze in and lift up. Practise inhaling downwards, relaxing and inflating your core and pelvic floor and exhaling and contracting your pelvic floor. Others cues to contract your pelvic floor maybe: imagine picking up a tissue or blueberry with your vagina, or holding in a tampon then letting them go...make sure you can feel the let go too, if you can't you need to work on that or follow up with me or a pelvic floor physio. Pelvic floor tension is common and could be the cause of your problems.

By incorporating effective breathing techniques into your movements, training or exercise, less pressure will be placed on your pelvic floor therefore reducing the risk of dysfunction or helping to heal any dysfunctions.

Furthermore to complete your connection breath, add in the contraction of your deep abdominal muscles with your contraction of your pelvic floor:

4. Place your index and middle fingers together just above your hip bones and gently feel deep into your core. On your exhale breath you are going to contract your pelvis floor and deep core muscles (transverse abdominals), to do this imagine you have a line of string between your hip bones and you are going to tighten the tension on that line like you are giving yourself a gentle hug with your hip bones. You shouldn't see any major movement from the outside and you should be able to feel a tension deep in your core under your fingers. Try to keep your upper core relaxed.

This completes how to do a core connection breath and is the foundation on which to build most loaded movements or exercises on to best support your core and pelvic floor for optimal functioning for the rest of your life.

[See this video for demo of the core connection breath](#)