A photograph of a paved road winding through a forest. The road has a yellow center line and is flanked by trees with green and some autumn-colored leaves. The sky is visible through the canopy.

The Road to Pelvic Health for All!

Part 1 The Pelvic Floor

Report Compiled by Beta Marketing (2019)

Part 1

The Pelvic Floor

Content:	Page
Introduction	3
What is a Pelvic Floor?	5
Maintaining the Pelvic Floor	7
Do Men Have a Pelvic Floor?	8
Let's talk Hypertonic	9
How to Find Your Pelvic Floor	10
Important Notices	11
Sources	12

IMPORTANT NOTE

The information in this report is for educational purposes only.
It is not medical advice. Should you have any of these issues or problems please consult your Doctor.

Introduction

Well done, you have taken the first brave step to finding out more about your situation.

Incontinence of any kind, at any time of your life can go from mildly embarrassing to down right debilitating and the road to finding out what is going on with you and what you can do about it, can be a rather daunting, long and bumpy journey.

You may be ashamed, embarrassed or afraid to leave the house in case you have an accident.

Or, you are reluctant to laugh and try not to sneeze or cough near people, even though you wear pads to catch those accidental leaks.

Your confidence and self-esteem may be at an all time low and intimacy may have disappeared.

Don't lose hope. The good news is that the majority of incontinence cases are treatable or at the very least manageable.

Don't give up. Be persistent!

Continue trying to find out what will work for you. It may be one solution or a combination of things. Keep looking for your answers.

You are the key to achieving your pelvic health.

Understand that urinary incontinence is not an inevitable part of giving birth or ageing.

Although it is a common problem, incontinence is not normal and should be treated like any other health issue.

It is not something you have to put up with for the rest of your life however, early treatment is really key to fixing the problem.

Over the next eight weeks we look forward to sharing knowledge and insights that we hope will bring you a good understanding of your situation and where possible, provide options that may be of benefit.

The eight part report, we have compiled, includes the following sections, BONUS guides and diaries:

REPORT: PELVIC HEALTH FOR ALL includes:

- **PART 1: What is the pelvic Floor**

BONUS: Kegel exercises for women AND Pelvic floor exercises for men plus instructions.pdf

- **PART 2: What is incontinence, its diagnosis & causes**

BONUS: Pelvic floor (Kegel) Seating guide and Quick start guide for both men & women

- **PART 3: Incontinence treatment & potential complications**

BONUS: Bladder Diary

- **PART 4: Bowel Incontinence: Faecal Incontinence**

BONUS: Bristol Stool Chart

- **PART 5: Bowel Incontinence: Flatus Bowel Incontinence**

BONUS: Bowel Diary

- **PART 6: Urinary Incontinence: Types of Urinary Incontinence**

BONUS: Guide to retraining urge incontinence

- **PART 7: Urinary Incontinence: Types of Urinary Incontinence Continued**

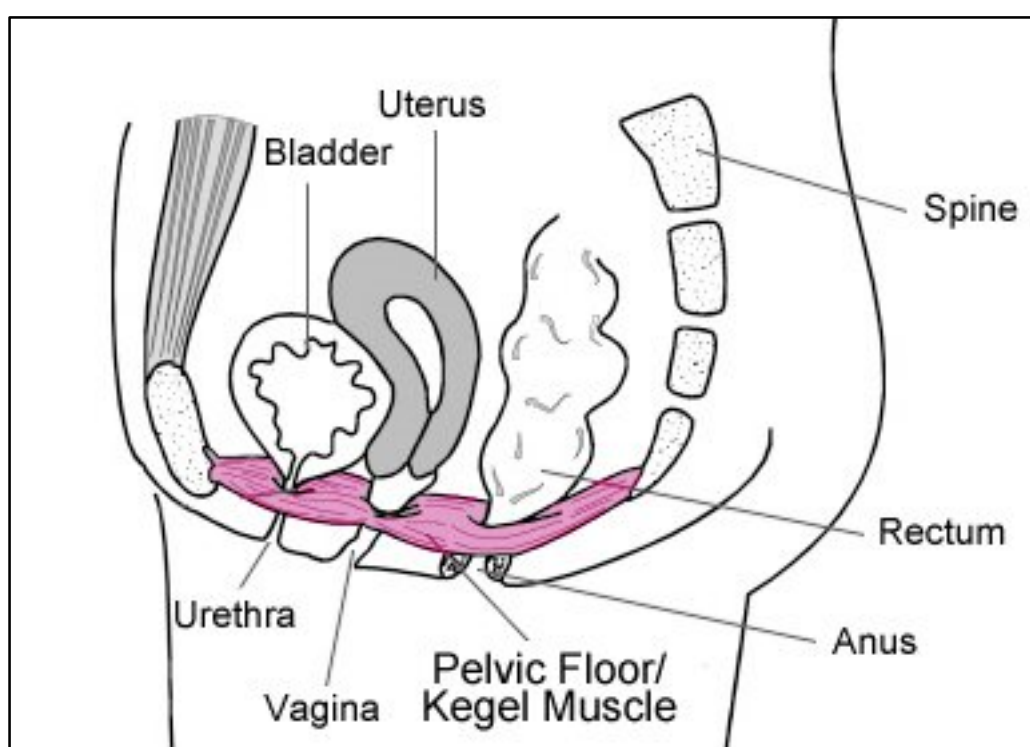
BONUS: Retraining Diary

- **PART 8: Double Incontinence: Bladder & Bowel**

BONUS: Food Diary

What is the Pelvic Floor?

You might have heard of the pelvic floor muscles, also known as Kegels or PC muscles. These terms all refer to the same collection of muscles, fibres and ligaments that work together to support your pelvic organs and give you control – including faecal and urogenital control (control of both urinary and genital organs).



The pelvic floor muscles, or 'Kegel muscles' are made up of three main layers of pelvic muscle:

1. **The superficial group:** This is the group of muscles that are found at the entrance to the vagina. This is the group that helps with sexual function and helps to control the bladder. After childbirth, these muscles can become weak. They can also weaken over time due to ageing and menopause.
2. **The urogenital muscle group** - This is the group of muscles that surround the urinary and genital muscles, and are responsible for bladder function.

3. **The deep pelvic floor muscle group** - These muscles are called levator ani. It extends from the pubic bone at the front, towards the coccyx at the back and the side walls towards the hips. It is a broad, thin group of muscles which is made up of 3 parts:
- The iliococcygeus muscle
 - The pubococcygeus muscle
 - The puborectalis muscle.

These 3 groups of muscles are the main support for your pelvic floor, and provide a sort of 'hammock' for the pelvic organs. They form a platform which helps to keep your pelvic organs in place.

Pelvic floor muscles are important for:

Sexual function - In men, strong pelvic floor muscles aid erectile function and ejaculation. In women, the squeezing of the pelvic floor muscles is responsible for sexual sensation and arousal.

Pregnancy and childbirth - In women, pelvic floor muscles provide support for the baby during pregnancy and assist in childbirth.

Continence - Weak pelvic muscles in women can allow the bladder and rectum to drop and prolapse (bulge) into the vagina, causing urinary and sometimes faecal incontinence. In men, leaking can occur when the pelvic floor is weakened after prostate surgery.

Posture and support - Working together with the core muscles of the abdomen and back, the pelvic floor muscles help to stabilise and support the spine.

Healthy bowel movements - Constipation can occur where your rectum or small bowel (small intestine) loses its support from the pelvic floor muscles.

Maintaining the Pelvic Floor

The pelvic floor is not strengthened through traditional exercises such as running, sport or gym. they are only strengthened with Kegel exercises (also referred to as Pelvic Floor exercises).

If you leave these muscles to weaken – as they naturally will for all of us (more quickly for mothers and those approaching menopause), you are knowingly putting yourself at risk of leaking when you laugh, cough, sneeze, run, squat or even worse, your pelvic floor muscles could give way completely resulting in pelvic organ prolapse.

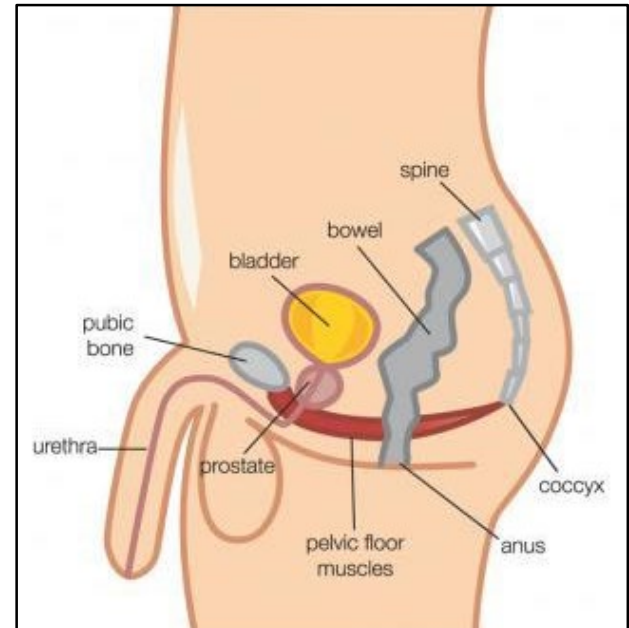
You should make exercising your Kegel muscles (Pelvic Floor muscles) part of your daily exercise routine. Dr Arnold Kegel published his original clinical research in 1948 about the importance of pelvic exercise – but it seems as though both men and women still don't realise how important it really is!

Do Men Have A Pelvic Floor?

Many people don't realise that yes, the male pelvic floor also exists and is as important as the female pelvic floor.

The male pelvic floor works in a similar way to the females. It supports the bowel and bladder and prevents dribbles and leaks just the same as in women.

However, the male pelvic floor also supports the prostate and plays a huge part in sexual function.



Its strength also determines your erection strength and weak muscles can lead to erectile dysfunction and difficulty ejaculating.



As mentioned, your pelvic floor is a group of muscles which form a sling shape which runs from your pubic bone to the base of your spine.

One of these muscles actually sits at the base of the penis and is responsible for erections and ejaculation. It is often this muscle which starts to weaken first and if ignored, it simply stops functioning.

In conclusion, it is just as important for men to do pelvic floor exercises on a regular and consistent basis, as it is for women.

Let's talk Hypertonic

It's true that pelvic floor muscles weaken with age, but this isn't the only cause of pelvic floor problems in men.

In younger men, the muscles can become too tight, which can be just as damaging and result in hypertonic pelvic floor (permanent tightening of the muscles).

Whilst this is a particular problem for super-fit gym-goers, it can also be caused by emotional stress and it can lead to severe pain in the rectum, genital area and even the lower back.

One way to alleviate this is to practice pelvic floor exercises.

Pelvic floor exercise is becoming increasingly recognised as a first-line treatment for male incontinence, problems with erections and premature ejaculation, as well as being an important part of recovery after pelvic surgery, such as prostate surgery.

Manual pelvic floor exercises are a process of contracting and relaxing your pelvic floor muscles, but when these muscles are so difficult to isolate and the technique is hard to consistently maintain on a regular basis. It's easier said than done and you may want to go to a Physiotherapist (that specializes in pelvic floor rehabilitation) or you may prefer an electronic pelvic floor toner for men.

Whatever you do, don't ignore it, make a choice and do it!

How to Find Your Pelvic Floor Muscles

As mentioned, the pelvic floor muscles act as a hammock support all the pelvic organs, keeping them in their naturally elevated positions. Your vagina/penis, urethra and anus all pass through the pelvic floor muscles to the outside. For them all to function correctly, you need a strong pelvic floor.

The pelvic floor muscles themselves cannot be seen from the outside but their effects can be felt by you and your partner. For women try the finger test; insert a couple of fingers into your vagina and squeeze your pelvic floor muscles. You should feel a gentle squeeze on your fingers if you are contracting your muscles in the right way. Your partner should be able to feel this squeeze when you have penetrative sex.

Another way to be aware of these muscles – and this applies to both men and women; imagine trying to stop passing wind in public, lift and squeeze the muscles in and around the anus. In so doing, you will be able to further identify more of the right pelvic floor muscles.

In addition (and this applies to both sexes), when going to the bathroom; try stopping your urine mid-flow. By doing this your pelvic floor muscles are lifting and squeezing in and around your urethra trying to stop the flow. Men, if you look in the mirror, what you will see, with the correct pelvic floor contraction, is a slight lifting of the scrotum and a slight retraction of the penis.

However, ladies and gentlemen, **don't do this often!** Stopping the flow of urine repeatedly can lead to the inability to fully empty your bladder and an increased risk of developing a urinary tract infection.

----- END OF PART 1 -----

Important Notices

FIND 2x DOWNLOADABLE PDF BONUSES ON THE PART 1 REPORT PAGE

1. How to do Kegel Exercises for Women & Instructions.pdf
2. How to do Pelvic Floor Exercises for Men & Instructions.pdf

NEXT WEEK - KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR PART 2

What is Incontinence, Its Diagnosis & Causes

With BONUS: Pelvic Floor (Kegel) exercises seating guide.pdf AND quick start guide for both men & women.pdf

Medical knowledge is always advancing and in light of this we acknowledge that this information herein is current as of the date of publication (July 2019) and that some information may no longer be valid in the future.

For updates and a first world understanding of what the current medical practices are, visit the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (www.nice.org.uk) for advice into procedures you are offered .

If you have not yet subscribed for the full 8-part report titled, **The Road to Pelvic Health for All**, you can do so here:

www.pelvichealthsubscribe.betamarketing.co.za

Sources

1. National Association for Continence www.nafc.org
2. Women's Health <http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/womenshealth/factsheets/inc.htm>
3. Bladder & Bowel Community <https://www.bladderandbowel.org/bladder/bladder-conditions-and-symptoms/overflow-incontinence>
4. Bladder & Bowel Community <https://www.bladderandbowel.org/bladder/bladder-conditions-and-symptoms/stress-urinary-incontinence>
5. Bladder & Bowel Community <https://www.bladderandbowel.org/bladder/bladder-conditions-and-symptoms/urgency-and-urge-incontinence>
6. Bladder & Bowel Community <https://www.bladderandbowel.org/bladder/bladder-conditions-and-symptoms/overactive-bladder>
7. Bladder & Bowel Community <https://www.bladderandbowel.org/bowel/bowel-problems/faecal-incontinence/>
8. American College of Gastroenterology <https://gi.org/topics/fecal-incontinence/>
9. International Journal of Contemporary Medical Research Review Article: Risk Factors for Stress Urinary Incontinence in Women
https://www.ijcmr.com/uploads/7/7/4/6/77464738/ijcmr_1694_v1.pdf
10. Kegel8 <https://www.kegel8.co.uk>
11. The Pelvic Pain Clinic UK <https://www.thepelvicpainclinic.co.uk>
12. NHS (UK) <https://www.nhs.uk/news>
13. NHS (UK) <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/urinary-incontinence>
14. NHS (UK) <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/urinary-incontinence/treatment>
15. NHS (UK) <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-incontinence>
16. NHS (UK) <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-incontinence/treatment>
17. NHS (UK) <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/prostatitis>
18. NHS (UK) <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/urinary-incontinence>
19. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence NICE (UK)
<https://www.nice.org.uk/news/blog>
20. Continence Foundation of Australia <https://www.continence.org.au/pages/key-statistics.html>

21. Continence Foundation (AU) <https://www.continence.org.au/pages/what-can-happen-to-the-pelvic-floor-muscles.html>
22. Continence Foundation (AU) <https://www.continence.org.au/pages/men.html>
23. Continence Foundation (AU) <https://www.continence.org.au/pages/women.html>
24. UCSF Health (USA) https://www.ucsfhealth.org/education/bladder_training
25. Healthline <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/12-benefits-of-meditation#section2>
26. Bowel Incontinence Definition – Medline Plus
<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003135.htm>
27. Cochrane Research Body
<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD007471.pub3/full?highlight=Abstract=incontinence%7Cincontin%7Cwithdrawn%7Cintervention%7Cintervent%7Cearly%7Cearly%7Cincontinenc>
28. Medical News Today- Fecal Impaction
<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/322150.php>
29. Incontinence UK <https://www.incontinence.co.uk/what-is-double-incontinence>
30. Medical Dictionary <https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com>
31. Merriam-Webster Medical Definitions - <https://www.merriam-webster.com/medical>
32. Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giggle_incontinence
33. NCBI (USA) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5999241>
34. Webmd.com <https://www.webmd.com/urinary-incontinence-oab/bladder-training-techniques#1>