

What is Women's Health Physical Therapy?

Women's health physical therapy addresses a variety of conditions of the pelvic area — in men as well as women. Patients suffering pain or dysfunction associated with the pelvic floor musculature are generally referred to specially trained physical therapists by obstetricians, gynecologists, urogynecologists, gastroenterologists, urologists or primary care physicians.

Women's health physical therapists work with patients to overcome pain, regain bowel and/or bladder function, return to sexual function and resume an active and lifestyle.

CCWC has women's health physical therapists in the Denver and Stapleton clinics who treat:

- Pelvic pain
- Urinary incontinence
- Fecal incontinence or constipation
- Pain and dysfunction associated with pregnancy, both before and after, including hip and back pain
- Pain with sexual intercourse or penetration
- Sagging or prolapsed pelvic organs
- Abdominal pain associated with pelvic or abdominal surgery
- Shoulder pain due to mastectomy
- Testicular or penile pain

How PT helps with urological and colorectal conditions

The pelvic floor muscles contribute to bladder and bowel control in men and women. They work as a “drawstring” to keep the contents of the bladder and rectum contained within the body. When these muscles become either too tight — in spasm, or too loose or weak, dysfunction can result. The point of pain may not be the point of dysfunction, making diagnosis difficult.

Physical therapists work to train the pelvic floor muscles to function properly. Treatment often includes behavioral techniques, such as relaxing or re-educating the muscles of the bladder; manual therapy to decrease tight muscles or mobilize scar tissue; and an exercise program to retrain dysfunctional or weak muscles.

PT for tailbone pain

The tailbone, or coccyx, and the sacrum, the bone at the bottom of the spine, attach to our pelvic floor muscles. Spasm of the pelvic floor can result in coccyx or rectal pain. Like the rest of our spine, the coccyx and sacrum make up a joint, which must adapt to all of our movements.

Pain results when this joint doesn't move properly. Sometimes it gets stuck in place for no obvious reason, but usually the coccyx and sacrum lose mobility after an injury or childbirth. An X-ray is always required to rule out a fracture. A physical therapist can treat joint dysfunction and muscle spasm.

PT for men's health

PT can effectively treat men who suffer from incontinence, urinary retention, constipation and pelvic pain, all results of musculoskeletal dysfunction. Muscles can malfunction, nerves get entrapped, scar tissue forms and pelvic pain can arise. After a simple evaluation, the physical therapist creates a plan of care that includes manual therapy, simple exercises and biofeedback to re-educate and these systems to function normally.

Enlarged prostates generally do not improve with physical therapy.

Biofeedback to change in muscle patterns

Physical therapists often use biofeedback to encourage change in a muscle patterns. Surface electrodes are placed on the abdominal region and/or the pelvic floor and muscle activity is transmitted to a handheld biofeedback unit or a computer screen. Internal electrodes are also used when necessary. This gives the patient a visual image of the muscles' activity.

Physical therapist will use biofeedback to train a pelvic floor muscle to work properly or allow it to relax. Medical research supports the use of biofeedback in the treatment of a number of conditions, including incontinence after prostate removal, urinary and fecal incontinence, and chronic pelvic pain.

Visceral and scar tissue mobilization

Physical therapists may use manual therapy techniques on both women and men to treat tightness in tissues throughout the abdominal and pelvic regions. To function properly, our organs must move and expand. Scarring in connective or soft tissue surrounding the organs can restrict organ function and cause pain.

For example, our bladders and bowels need to expand to fill and contract to empty. Scar tissue from surgery or a cesarean section can disrupt these processes. By mobilizing the pelvic tissue through manual therapy, a physical therapist can restore normal bladder and bowel function.

THIS IS A SEPARATE ARTICLE

The Stapleton office has moved

The CCWC Stapleton clinic has moved to a more spacious location at 3401 Quebec St., Suite 3100. It's the same building at 35th and Quebec, but a new suite. We now have 2,000 square feet of updated space containing three treatment rooms, a large gym and mountain views throughout. In addition to physical therapy we offer massage therapy and Pilates classes. Come by for a visit!