

## What to expect on your first visit?

During the initial evaluation, you will have the opportunity to advise your physical therapist of your symptoms as well as past medical history. Every treatment session is individualized to address your concerns, goals, and gives you the opportunity to tell your story to our specially trained staff. Your physical therapist will listen to your story and provide appropriate resources, give you a realistic prognosis, and diagnosis to help you function at your best. During the initial evaluation, your physical therapist may need to perform an internal pelvic assessment. This is minimally invasive and separate from a prostate examination.

Your physical therapist may insert one gloved finger into the rectum (if applicable) to assess the muscle strength, tone, endurance, and integrity of the pelvic muscle tissue. Each pelvic physical therapist has had specialized training and is qualified to perform this internal assessment.



As part of their training in this specialized field, they have had these techniques and assessments performed on themselves, and will guide you through the entire process. They will explain their rationale for what they are doing, and will be able to cue you in what they need you to do. You have the ability to ask questions or request to stop/pause at any time during the pelvic assessment.

During your examination, your pelvic physical therapist will likely examine related areas such as your hips and low back as these areas may be contributing to your pelvic symptoms. After the assessment, your pelvic physical therapist will explain their findings, discuss a treatment plan, and discuss how pelvic physical therapy can best help you meet your specific goals.

## FAQ's

**Q. What if I need to go to the bathroom during the assessment or treatment?**

A. There is a restroom down the hall in close proximity to the clinic.

**Q. What if I am not comfortable with having an internal examination?**

**Can I still have treatment without an internal examination?**

A. You will not be examined without your consent. It is understandable that patients may not want to have an internal examination performed. If you opt out of the internal examination/assessment there are external techniques and assessments as well as educational methods to help you improve your condition. If you are unsure at the initial evaluation, you can defer the internal assessment to subsequent visits as you start becoming more comfortable with your pelvic floor physical therapist.

**Q. What if I would like someone else present during the assessment?**

A. You're welcome to bring another person with you that you feel comfortable with, or request a chaperone be present (this is typically another staff member).

**Q. Will my physical therapist be a female or male?**

A. Currently all of our pelvic therapists are female.

**Q. I already know how to perform Kegel contractions, but my symptoms persist. How will this help me?**

A. Training the pelvic floor can involve strengthening the muscles (i.e. performing Kegels), however most people have not been trained in how to perform them correctly and can actually be training bad habits which can lead to more harm than good. Your pelvic physical therapist will be able to identify the optimal repetitions, hold times, and rest times to give you the most effective results.

**Q. What should I wear? Will I need to get undressed?**

A. For the internal pelvic assessment and a majority of the manual pelvic floor treatments/ techniques you will need to undress from the bottom down, otherwise you will be fully clothed. You will likely be doing various stretching and strengthening exercises during your PT session so wearing comfortable clothing that you can easily move in is recommended.

**Q. How long will sessions be?**

A. Sessions will vary from 30 mins – 1 hour based on your individual needs.

**Q. Where will the physical therapy sessions take place?**

A. All of the evaluations and assessments take place in a private room behind a closed door.

**Q. Will I need to exercise at home?**

A. Yes, your physical therapist will likely give you specific exercises that best serve you.

**Q. Will I need to buy specialized equipment?**

A. This will be up to you and your pelvic floor physical therapist. Suggestions may be made; however, it is your choice.

**Q. What if I am embarrassed about my condition, and find it hard to talk about?**

A. Your pelvic physical therapist is a professional with your best interests in mind. While it can often times be difficult or challenging to talk freely about your symptoms, it is very important that you are as forthcoming as possible for them to help you in the most ideal way. Your Pelvic therapist is on your team and will do their best to make you feel comfortable as they understand this is a sensitive subject.

**Q. I have pain with ejaculation and/or intercourse, how is pelvic PT going to help me?**

A. Your physical therapist will identify what is causing the dysfunction and treat it appropriately using various techniques. This may include manual therapy, neuromuscular re-education, and patient education to name a few.