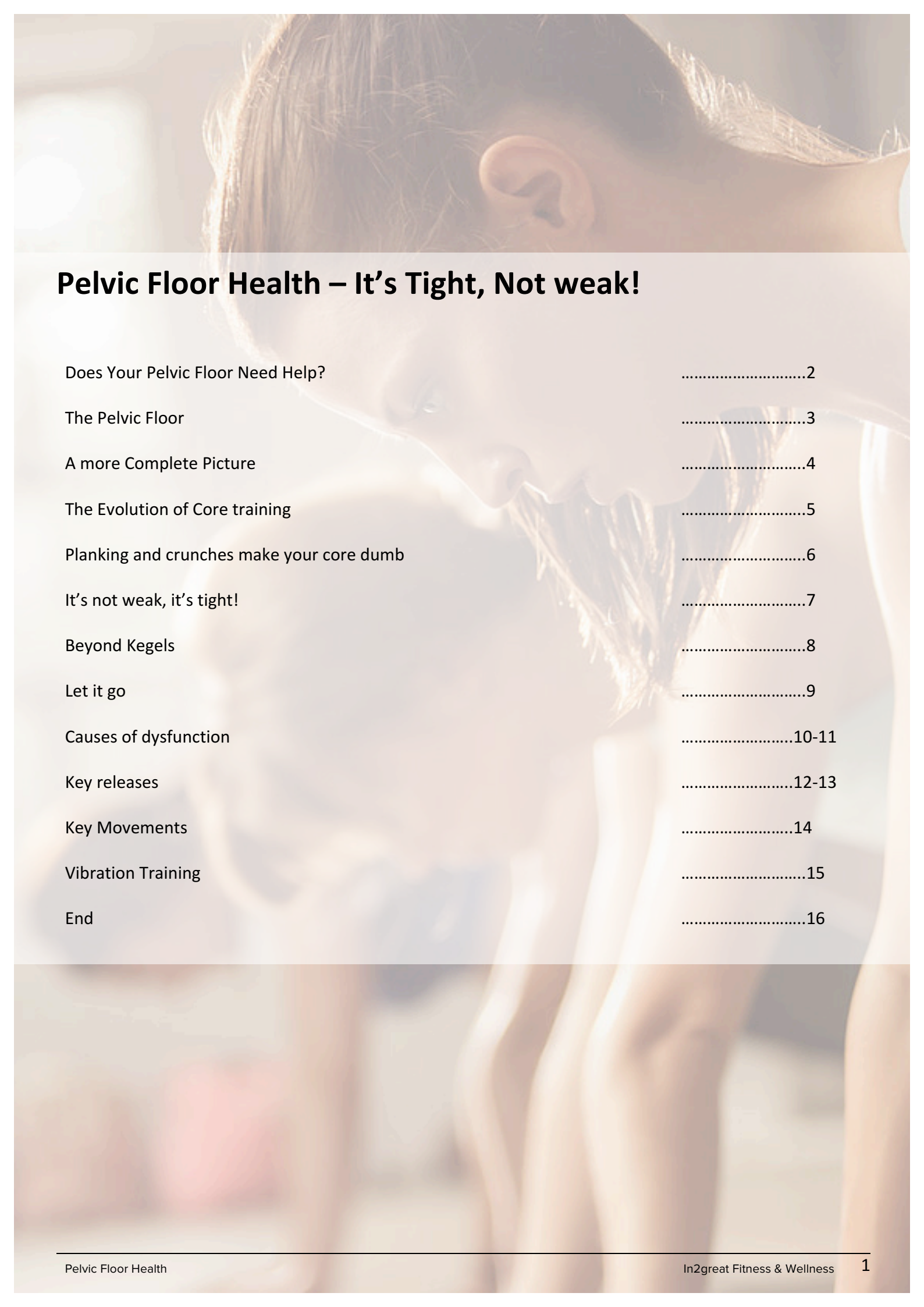




IN2GREAT
FITNESS & WELLNESS

Pelvic Floor Health



Pelvic Floor Health – It’s Tight, Not weak!

Does Your Pelvic Floor Need Help?	.....2
The Pelvic Floor	.....3
A more Complete Picture	.....4
The Evolution of Core training	.....5
Planking and crunches make your core dumb	.....6
It’s not weak, it’s tight!	.....7
Beyond Kegels	.....8
Let it go	.....9
Causes of dysfunction	.....10-11
Key releases	.....12-13
Key Movements	.....14
Vibration Training	.....15
End	.....16

Does Your Pelvic Floor Need Help?

The pelvic floor is a confronting problem for many women and men. There is so much fear around 'leaking' and unfortunately it's commonly perceived that the problem is due to a lack of strength. While some women refuse to jump or bounce, other cross fit women leak proudly in public as they lift heavy weights. Leaking, pain and instability are not normal. The problem is more common than many of us would like to admit, and it's something that doesn't just happen after child birth.

Pelvic floor dysfunction happens in both men and women for a variety of reasons, and it's becoming more common due to sedentary modern lifestyles with too much time sitting or hunched over. Many feel embarrassed to speak out, or think that pelvic floor dysfunction is a regular part of the aging process. It's not!

The pelvis is one of the most important areas in the human body for movement, sexual function, digestion and elimination and breathing. A loss of pelvic floor integrity means more than just an embarrassing leak, it compromises movement, leads to increased pain and stiffness, and decreases the efficiency of digestion and breathing. It's an important area that we need to be healthy.

When this area breaks down, it's rarely because of a lack of strength in once tiny component of the pelvis. And so we encourage you to think about pelvic floor dysfunction, as a whole body problem. Pelvic floor dysfunction, is merely a symptom of a broken system that has lost efficiency.

Old school pelvic floor and core training methodologies are so engrained in our culture, that it will take a long time to move past some of the damaging concepts we have been taught. The information we will cover in this eBook is different to what you may have heard and experienced.

The great news is that the contemporary approach is common sense, and much more comprehensive!



**Sometimes I laugh
so hard tears run
down my legs!**

What is the pelvic floor?

Traditional definitions of the pelvic floor are centred around the smaller muscles of the pelvis that support our organs. This isolation type viewpoint fails to appreciate how very interconnected the entire body is, and how densely the fascial system weaves through the pelvis. While muscles are important for sure, it's more correct to say that there is one big fascial web, with 600 pockets of muscles. Much like an orange has many smaller segments with fascia separating tiny pockets of juice, so too is the connectivity of our human fascial system.

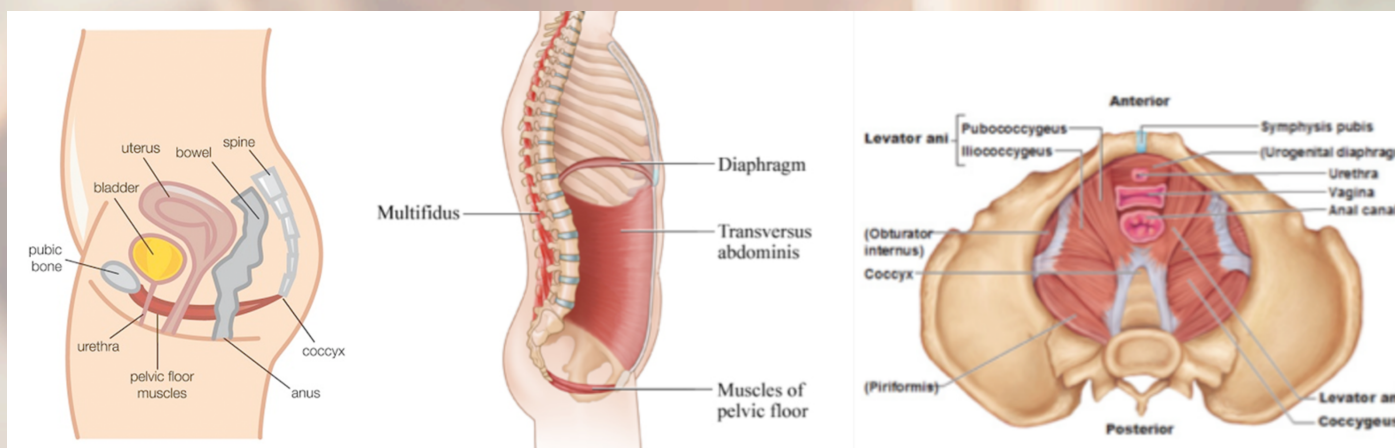
The answer to a more complete understanding of movement and enhancing our pelvic floor integrity, is in addressing the ubiquitous nature of our fascia. Fascia or connective tissue makes up 70%+ of our body and connects everything together. Fascia is the system that touches all other systems, and creates volume and space in the body. It's a global web of connective tissue that spans from toes to nose, encases and weaves through tendons, bones, organs, muscles and skin. Fascial health affects circulation, neural health, lymphatics, cellular health, digestion, energy, pelvic floor integrity, breathing and posture.

Fascia is 9-10 x more proprioceptively rich (a huge sensory net) than muscles, meaning it is vital for communicating with our nervous system, and navigating our environment. If we have 9-10 x more feedback in our fascia than our muscles, then it is a more viable solution for helping our pelvic floor to function better.



Think of your fascia like a multi layered, web like, full body suit that weaves from toes to nose, through and around muscles, ligaments and bones. When one part of the web underperforms or gets stuck, the rest must compensate, leading to pain and dysfunction.

Noteworthy Pelvic Points



1. It's a suspension bridge or trampoline that supports our organs and the entire torso. It needs to be both taut, and supple in order to adsorb and mitigate the forces of daily life.

2. It functions as part of a tensegrity system and needs to be trained to honour this. All systems are connected, and when there is a snag in the system, the tension relationships of every single cell in the body are affected.

3. It is made of muscles, fascia and joints and has connections in multiple angles, and layers all around the pelvis. There is no one exercise or solution; instead the pelvis needs variety to be able to maintain it's elastic potential.

A more complete pelvic floor picture

Check out the picture on the right – This is a fascial line of tissue (not muscle) that spans the length of our body called '*the deep front line*' courtesy of Anatomy Trains and Thomas Myers. It's probably one of the most important lines of tissue to address when it comes to pelvic floor integrity. The deep fascial tissue central to the body runs from the big toe, via the inseam of the leg, through the pelvic floor, through the viscera and front of the spine, all the way up to our tongue. Yes your big toe, is connected to your tongue.

Looking at the line of tissue and how interwoven it is through the pelvis, you can see how tightness and shortening of this line pulls us into poor posture, legs tightly held together (knock knees) and a digestive and sexual organ system that are being constricted. Studies show emotionally this posture promotes fear, sadness, anxiety, depression and increased stress hormones.

If we allow this fascial line to be glued up and thus disconnected to the rest of the body, then we dramatically decrease our pelvic floor (core) strength, not to mention decreasing our overall wellness. We find that glued up tissue in this fascial section with most clients often causes restricted movement, poor posture, pain, digestive disorders, dehydration, headaches, weight gain and pelvic floor dysfunction.

Fascia dictates your posture

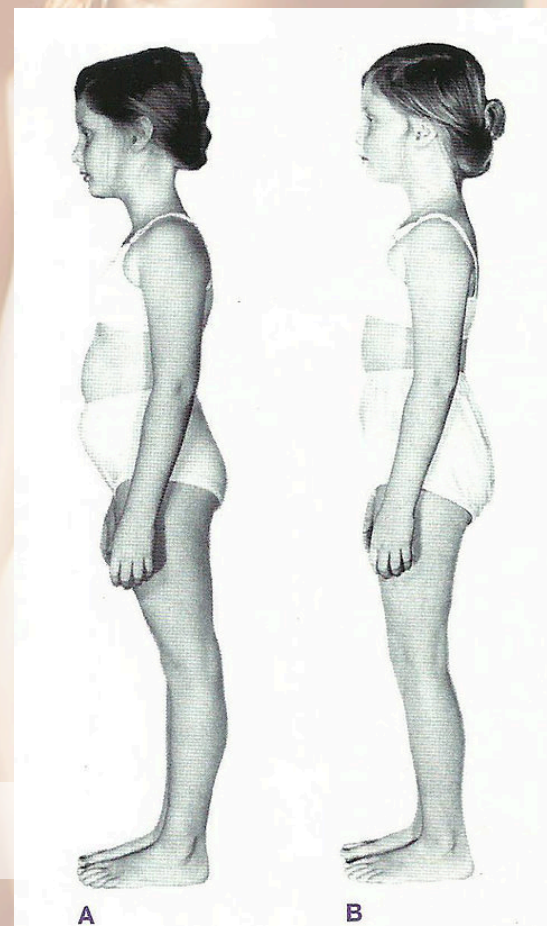
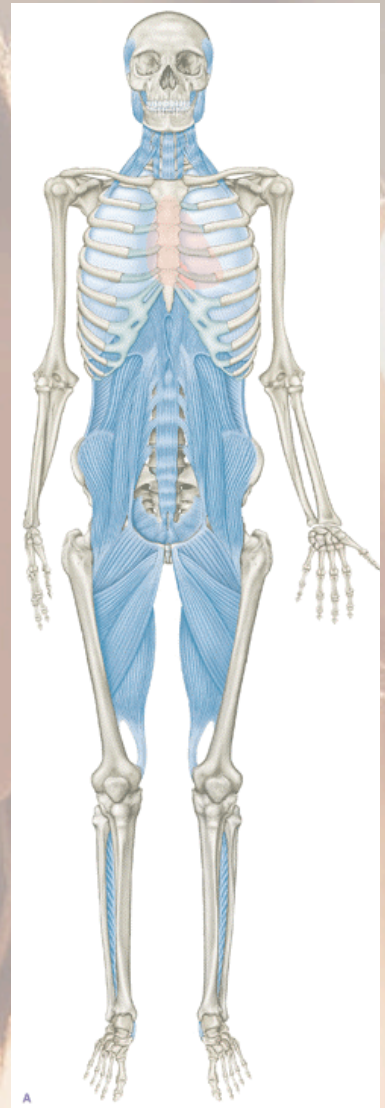
This picture demonstrates some dramatic changes in a young girl that have occurred simply by addressing tension relationships in her fascia. This before and after picture is dramatic, and can't be attributed to her simply standing taller, strengthening her 'weak' muscles, or sucking in her belly.

In picture A the girl looks bloated, overweight, and hanging off her back fascial tissue to hold her upright. Picture B shows a more harmonious balance between two of the major fascial lines running along the front and back of the body. Here the girl looks taller, leaner, and physically more balanced.

In terms of pelvic floor, the posture on the left means that the diaphragm and pelvic floor are not stacked, and the child's organs and belly are spilling forward. The pelvis in picture A is forward of the ankle and feet, meaning the child is hanging off the back of her body, creating an arch in the back, that will probably lead to pain. Picture A shows the impressive difference of hips eloquently stacked over feet.

Picture A exact type of posture that over a lifetime can cause pelvic floor dysfunction!

Fascia can make you look fatter & shorter!



The Evolution of Core Training

- **Pre Millennium** the focus was the abdominals and back muscles using traditional crunches / back extension exercises and core strength was seen as a solution for back pain.
- **Early 2000's** the focus shifted to training the inner and outer unit, and performing abdominal hollowing, and kegel based exercises.
- **Mid 2000's** focused on the binding of abdominal muscles layers and 'bracing' and 'planking' concepts exploded
- **2010- NOW** Myofascial connections, fascial lines and chain reaction mechanics. A new approach of integrated core training that is whole body movement based.

Our core consists of several muscles and layers of connective tissue/ fascia which should work together in synergy to form a FLEXIBLE support system as we move. The old muscle based approaches to core training and addressing the pelvic floor (or the whole body for that matter) are becoming irrelevant as they fail to show the tension relationships of the whole body. To train a muscle in isolation, is to set our bodies up for failure. The body never works in isolation. EVER.

Brace Your Core!

How often are we told to 'brace' our core when training? It's one of those cues that get's thrown around the fitness community, but no one seems to actually do it!

Try it now, stand up and squat. Brace your core. If you truly are bracing your core for that whole time, your squat would look rigid and anxious. But when you relax and let your highly intelligent body react, it handles the move no problem WITHOUT conscious activation. Conscious activation stresses the body and especially the brain.

We see this all the time with clients who have high pain levels. They are anxious and too conscious of their body, and perform exercises with fear and panic written all over their face. Clients like this are only made worse by PT's telling them to engage, suck in, pull back, etc. Too much thinking about a movement, leads to reduced rhythm and efficiency.

Think about it, day to day do you think about turning on your rectus abdominis when you crunch out of bed, or do you turn on your glutes to squat and sit on the toilet?

It's all about Rhythm Baby

Day to day movement is subconscious. Please go for a walk and feel your butt cheeks! You should feel the tissues turning on and off effortlessly without you telling them to do so. Your body works best when it can react efficiently to the forces thrown at it. For us to move with rhythm, efficiency and timing, muscles need to turn on and off in a chain reaction flow of energy.

Now try walking with your butt cheeks turned on and contracting the entire time. Firstly did you feel rhythm? Did you feel pain? This example immediately shows how flawed the bracing concept is!

The core was not designed to be rigid, it's designed to DANCE with hips – turning on and off, on and off, got it? Let's say that one more time - On and **OFF!** Besides when in life are we ever asked to hold still and brace? There is no functional carryover!

Planking Makes Your Core Dumb

Our muscles need to turn on and off, not be held for sustained contraction. When a muscle is contracting as hard as possible, it becomes ischemic, meaning blood and oxygen can't get in, and waste products can't get out. Trapped waste means painful muscles. When there is a lack of blood flow, the nerves signals to the contracted area become desensitised and we end up DE-training our core.



Research shows that after 10 seconds of planking, the abdominals turn off, and we no longer benefit!

If you really enjoy planking, aim to enrich the neurological feedback loop by only planking between 3-10 seconds, or aim to make your plank movement more variable in nature, by moving in different ways.

If we train the area to work in isolation, or to stay 'on', it then struggles to turn off! Muscles that stay activated are what lead to pain and compensation and many of the common injuries we see. For example many people cannot switch off their neck muscles, and they are ropery with trigger points and knots, because they are forced into constant load due to perhaps tightness in the front of the body.

When it comes to pelvic floor, most cases of dysfunction are due to a tensional strain somewhere that is forcing the pelvic floor to be pulled taught. A taught tissue is already pulled into tension, and so when additional stress comes along, like a laugh, sneeze or jump, the already taxed pelvic floor can't stretch any more, and leakage occurs!

Crunches and Floor Based Core Training

While sometimes there is a need for certain cases to be regressed back to the floor, we should aim to quickly get OFF the floor if we wish to have a healthy, functioning core and happy pelvis. When we lay on the floor crunching, not only are we adding too much stress to the neck and lower spine, but we are relying on the floor to stabilise us.

Floor work means that our feet and hips cannot help our bodies buffer loads, both areas are intricacy connected with pelvic function. Besides if your core and pelvic floor are compromised from a kyphotic (rounded shoulders) posture, then increasing that posture with crunches which isn't the best strategy in an area that is often already shortened and stuck in most people!

The core is best off with movements that challenge it to lengthen, and rotate, and move in multiple directions, as opposed to crunching and shortening. Given the connectivity of the big toe and foot arch to the pelvic floor, and the fact that we live our lives mostly standing up, it's more functional to train the core and pelvic floor in standing positions!



Life throws awkward angles and poses at us, varying forces and a constantly changing landscape. The healthiest pelvis is one that avoids training in repetition. Variety is the spice of life, and the success of a functional pelvic floor.

It's Not Weak – it's Tight. Stop Gripping!

The old approach to injury treatment in the body was that something must be weak or broken. This is sadly still the approach to pelvic floor dysfunction. Many wrongly assume that if a pelvic floor leaks, then it's simply failing due to a weakness. Rather than exploring what factors may have led to pelvic floor dysfunction, traditional approaches jump right into treating the site of dysfunction.

A tight pelvic floor is the equivalent to an elastic band that's being stretched to maximal tension. Tight tissue, tends to be dehydrated like a sponge that has been squeezed so all the water is pushed out. It's being pulled so tight, that it's dehydrated, and has no elasticity left. So, when our body has to suddenly sneeze, laugh, jump or squat, the pelvic floor has nothing less to give, no elasticity to shock absorb, and problems occur.

Check in with your pelvic floor right now and see if you can tell if it's contracting subconsciously. Can you relax it? When you have been contracting, or gripping a muscle for a long time, you lose sensitivity to it, as your nervous system begins to ignore the stimulus as normal. Most pelvic floor dysfunctions stem from a chronically tightened/ shortened or hypertonic pelvic floor.

In these situations, it's important to find why the pelvic floor can't switch off, what is pulling it into that position. Consciously relaxing it won't do much if we don't find the root cause dysfunction.

Slide & Glide

Another common cause of pelvic floor dysfunction is a lack of sensation altogether, due to stuck layers of tissue that are not able to slide and glide over each other. When fascial layers get glued together, movement becomes clunky and restricted, as well as energy expensive as more muscles or tissue segments are pulled into co-contraction. When we lose the ability of multiple layers to roll over each other, the brain cannot feel and interpret the sensations and movement information from the area, making it numb. This numbness and loss of proprioception is why so many women struggle to perform kegels anyway!

Veins, arteries, lymphatic ducts and nerves run through our rich fascial network. When we lose the slide and glide of our connective tissue, we can decrease blood flow, lymphatic waste removal and even suffer decreased neurological function!

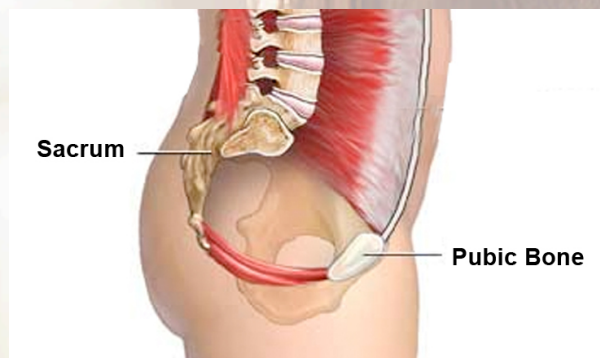
A Supple Pelvic Floor

Ideally the pelvic floor should operate like a trampoline - taut, but also supple to absorb force. To achieve a taut pelvic floor, it needs to be held firmly on all sides of the pelvis, particularly by strong working bum muscles. Strong, mobile glutes help to suspend the pelvic floor. Tight (as in dehydrated and lacking full range) glutes make the pelvic floor more like a saggy trampoline that has lost its elasticity. It's not just a matter of strengthening the glute muscles, it's more about un-gluing stuck deep tissue, and finding ways to load it through a full range of motion.

The inner thigh and outer hip are also crucial areas that must move well for pelvic floor health. The inner thigh adductor muscles are a common culprit in pelvic pain or dysfunction, and most clients get tremendous changes when we release the area, and get it moving better with the pelvis.

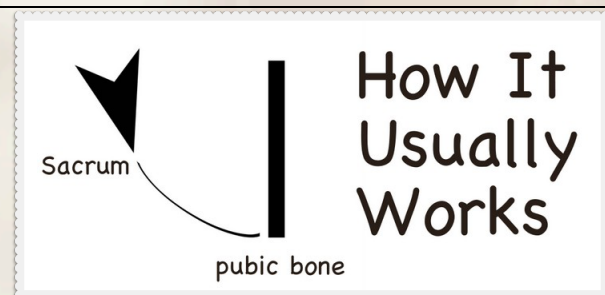
Beyond Kegels

Kegels are usually best to avoid as they focus on adding more tension to the pelvic floor by pulling the sacrum inward, and downward, encouraging even more pelvic gripping. Too many kegels plus tight glutes, and stuck pelvic tissue, don't address the root cause, and often lead to further pelvic floor problems.



Ideal Function

The sacrum and pubic bone are positioned with ideal tension between them to suspend the pelvic floor and support it on all sides. The pelvis is neither tipped forward or back, and sits over the feet with equal balance from left to right.



Pelvic Floor Dysfunction

Weak bum Muscles, prolonged sitting and anterior hip tilts (tummy contents spilling forward) create less tension between the sacrum and pubic bone either allowing for pelvic floor sag, or compromised positioning causing less movement and stuck, areas.



Pictures courtesy of mummypotamus.com

Kegels pull everything tighter

Drawing everything tighter creates more tension and doesn't solve the positional problem that caused the dysfunction in the first place.

Why might we be subconsciously tightening this area?

Stress tends to hold itself as physical tension, and common areas of storage are in the deep core, softer underbelly or inner hip. Stuck emotions tend to pull us into foetal position, or make us look like gravity is winning the postural battle when we stand up.

If we are not getting enough *motion* to this tissue to disperse stuck *E-motion*, then we get stuck stress and tension patterns. Whether it's psychological stress, or physiological, the body is forced to store it

Pelvic floor issues, are the result of how you have moved over your life and day-to-day lifestyle factors. Tension here can happen as a result of organ stress like bladder infection, poor digestion, a lack of tissue hydration, stress, too much sitting, repetitive movement, chest breathing, wearing too tight clothes etc. Think about the effects of clamping down on this region in your body to your digestion, elimination processes etc. Nothing works well when this area is stuck and tight.

Let it Go - Stop Sucking In

Have you ever sucked in your tummy as you walked down the street to look slimmer? When you draw your belly in where does that mass go? For the stomach to be sucked in flatter, the contents of the belly goes up, or it goes down! If the mass goes up, it can create diaphragm and breathing problems and if this mass is pushed down, then it bears straight down adding pressure to the pelvic floor, adding to dysfunction.

Suck in your belly and notice how it affects your posture.

Where do you feel the tension when you suck your belly in?

Can you breathe with ease?

Is it easy to move or do you feel stiff and stuck?

There is a reason why we can't suck in our guts all day, it's uncomfortable because it's not good for us! Holding patterns like this start to get stuck in the body if used long term. If tummy tucking is one of your key habits, it might cause your pelvic floor to be weaker, your breathing to be shallower and up in your chest, and your neck muscles to have to jump in and help you breathe.

Let's try this, all hop onto all fours side on to the mirror. Can you let your belly hang out and actually relax, or is it programmed to pull in? There should be no pressure in your back, and your belly should look rounded. That is full abdominal release! Notice how relaxed your pelvic floor is? Now try and stand up and create the same feeling. Keep checking yourself for gut tension and gut clenching, and try to release.

We are the sum of our habits, and repetitive stress like postural habits, or repeated positions shape us over time. Our fascia, cells and even our bones respond to mechanical stress and adapt. If we don't move often with variety, we literally can become stuck in a certain way.

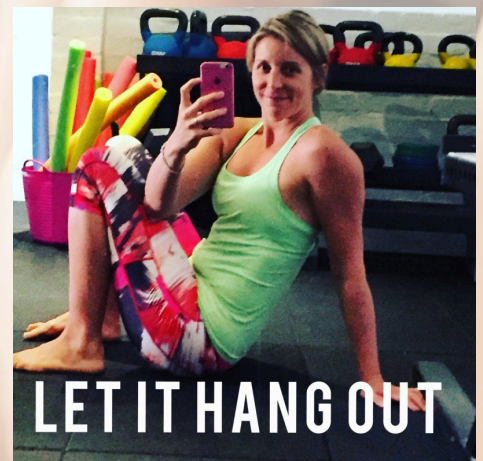
Your body is smart and it attempts to make you more efficient at the things you do the most. For example if you spend a lot of time hunched forward at a desk, your body lays down more thickened tissue at the back of the neck to help support you in this position. The thicker this tissue gets, the less movement it has, and the more stuck we become.

It's the exact same principle we use in traditional weight training. If you overload a muscle, it will grow to become stronger. While this may be a desirable effect in some cases for training purposes, it's not desirable for posture or for global body efficiency.

Let it hang out and RELAX.

It's better for your health in so many ways. And if your belly is hanging out all the time, then let's figure out why! There is a lot you can change to enhance posture to open the body and stop overhangs.

When you sit like this, you should always have a roll or a bulges a you crunch forward so don't be ashamed, own it. And next time you are scrolling glossy magazines or Instagram fitness models, have a chuckle at how their core bracing and sucking in is loading their pelvic floor!



Causes of Pelvic Dysfunction

Pelvic floor issues can occur for many reasons. Acute trauma to the area, child birth, surgery or injury are obvious influences that might cause problems, but there are many other factors you might not expect!

Breathing

The way we breath can enhance or devastate function. It's estimated that we breath around 20,000 times per day, and if we are stressed and falling into chest breathing patterns, rather than efficient belly breaths, that will ultimately change the tension on the pelvic floor. Shallow stressed breathing patterns mean the pelvic floor is held tight, and doesn't get a chance to load, and unload.

Hormones

A lack of Estrogen, Progesterone and even testosterone can create pelvic floor issues like incontinence. Additionally, hormone imbalance will lead to changes in muscle mass, bone density, digestion, detoxification and cellular function, all of which may create more problems.

Clothing

Corsets are an older example of how clothing will mess with our physiology. Unfortunately, waist trainers are becoming popular as a way to appear skinnier, but ultimately these devices negatively impact our structure and function, creating more downward pressure on the pelvic floor, and feeding into bad breathing habits. Tight jeans, thick banded leggings or belts can also limit the natural movement of the pelvis, leading to faulty dispersal of load, and encouraging dysfunction.

Sitting & Sedentary Lifestyles

A lack of healthy movement means that our circulation and lymphatics slow down. We need movement for healthy function in all aspects of our physiology, but prolonged sitting in particular (especially slouching) means that our tail bone is tucked under and our pelvic floor isn't supported. The more hours we spend sitting, the more stuck our connective tissue becomes, making it harder to move efficiently. Long bouts of sitting squash the inner thighs and hamstrings together, squeezing all the water out of the tissue, leading to inefficiency in loading the pelvis in all planes of motion.

Gut Health

If our digestive health is lacking, we may experience bloating, constipation, or diarrhea, leaky gut and ultimately inflammation. All of these conditions can lead to both structural in the abdomen, as well as chemical, metabolic and hormone changes system wide. If the gut is bloated, inflamed and not functioning properly, it will sit heavily on top of a pelvic floor, adding more stress to the area.

Posture

As we have already discussed, bad posture is one of the most common ways we can run into trouble. If the entire system cannot function well, and certain areas are over working while others are stuck and tight, we have greater tension building in the body, wasting energy resources, and decreasing efficient movement and function. Good posture is not about strengthening weak areas, or loosening tight areas, it's about enhancing the structure from the ground up, so that our body can support itself. This means increasing fascial health, and moving intelligently so as to change the forces put through the body so it can make positive adaptations.

Stress

If our stress response is ignited too often, our connective tissue becomes dehydrated, our hormones shift out of balance and we can suffer decreased resilience and oxidative damage. Stress is catabolic, meaning it breaks down our body, the very last thing we need if our pelvic structure is already suffering!

Body Fat

Excess body fat changes how our body holds itself, particularly when that fat is stored around the belly or hips. Extra weight, means extra load through the pelvis and an increased propensity to tip forward, letting the belly fall over the pubic bone, loading the lumbar spine. In addition excess body fat creates inflammation, higher stress hormones, and increased estrogen which can negatively impact health.

Nutrition

A diet high in processed industrial vegetable /nut /seed oils (like soy, canola, rice bran oil) and sugar, literally degrades our fascial tissue, and pulls cell membranes apart. When cellular health suffers, increased oxidation occurs, meaning our body starts to rust from the inside out.

Conversely a nutrient dense diet high in healthy fats (coconut, nuts, full fat dairy, olive oil), good quality grass fed, pasture raised proteins, wild caught cold water seafood, varied fibrous and starchy vegetables will support our body to build resilient tissue. Eating collagen rich foods like bone broth, meat off the bone, will supply our body with the building blocks to create strong fascia.

Shoes

Lazy feet that are in shoes all the time are less efficient. Supportive shoes lock up the foot arch and lift the big toe away from the ground (which are both directly connected to the pelvic floor) and mean that force is passed up the chain to the knees and hips. Our foot is an important suspension system and training barefoot and enhancing foot function and strength is a profound way to improve pelvic health.

Repetitive Movement Stress

How we move or don't determines our structure. Ultimately we are the sum of our habits and if all we do is run, then we get good at running, but often at the cost of moving efficiently in other planes of motion. Have you even seen those huge body builders who are brilliant at heavy lifts, but can't touch their toes to save themselves?

We need movement of all kinds, both loaded and unloaded, and linear and non-linear movement to build a strong body. Repetitive postures and movements are the enemy of the body. Variety in movement, exercise and life, builds a healthy body, and especially pelvic floor.



Ok So It's Tight & Stuck, Should We Stretch?

Stretching tight muscles won't help, neither will adding tension to it. Stretching tight tissue is like trying to stretch a knot out of a rope, it won't fix the shorter rope because the knot will just be pulled tighter. Likewise, 'activating' or trying to strengthen the area won't change the stuck knot area that isn't moving.

The stuck area needs movement. As we have discussed, the body needs movement in all angles and planes of motion for optimal function, and specifically fascial health. And thus the best way to get movement to the hydrate and stimulate the deeper muscles and connective tissue of the pelvic floor, is by moving in all directions (as per the picture on the previous page) to all interconnecting areas, so that we can rebalance the tension relationships to surrounding tissue, and train the pelvic floor to work synergistically with the rest of the body.

Which exercises you need to do for a happy pelvis? 'Do all of them' - Move your DNA, Katy Bowman

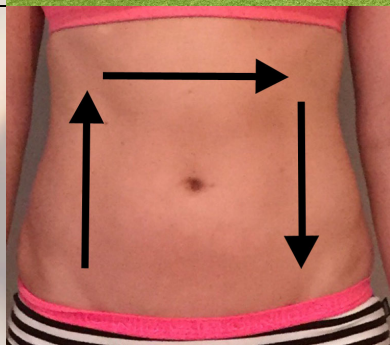
Key Releases

Because the whole body is connected, tension anywhere, can affect everywhere else. It's best to find someone who can watch you move, and read your body, to identify areas where you are being 'held', and help create a more comfortable posture for you. Below are a few key strategies to create change. There are many more of course, but these are a short cut version of some of our favourites.



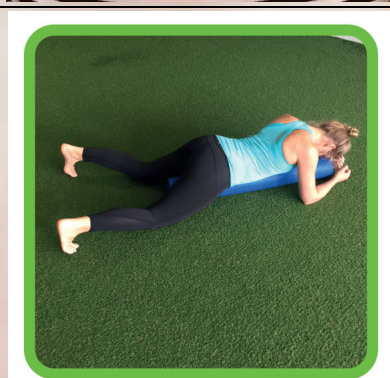
Diaphragmatic Breathing

Laying on your back with knees bent and feet on the floor is a good position to practice belly breathing. Focus on elongating your torso and breathing down to the pelvic floor, and laterally into the ribs. This will be hard at first, so you can place a weighted object or your hands on the belly to enhance the feedback to the areas. Avoid chest breathing. Aim for a pace of 6/4/10, meaning breath in for 6 counts through the nose, hold the breath for 4 counts, then breathe out through pursed lips (like a pressure hose) for 10 counts.



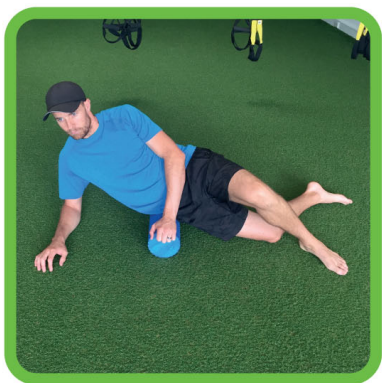
Visceral massage

Hands on massage to release stuck stress in the gut area. Use coconut oil and always go clockwise so as to help digestion. Don't be afraid to massage the deeper stuck tissue, you will be surprised how effective 5 minutes of stomach massage is in enhancing posture and making you feel taller and lighter.



Pubis

Laying face down, position the foam roller on the pubic bone. Slowly move side to side across the pubic bone, and let your weight relax on the roller. Rather than rolling, try to drag the tissue across the pubic bone. At first it usually feels numb, but as tissue hydration increases it's usually very tender. Go easy you first time and don't be shocked if you feel slightly bruised afterwards.



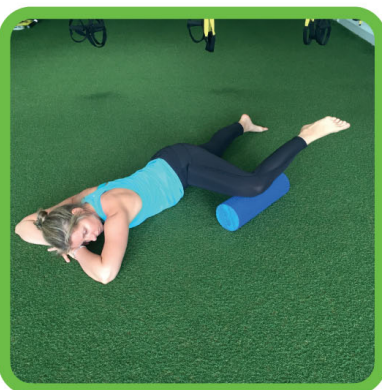
Lateral Hip

This area is crucial for great hip movement. Position the roller on the bony part of the hip, and drag forward and backwards, creating a 'shear' in the tissue. The movement is small, and the tension is minimal. It should not hurt, and you should be able to notice that the tissue is stuck and won't move a certain way.



Sacrum

With a tennis ball, position yourself to sit on the ball so that it is against the side of your sacrum. You can sit here and breathe, or gently move side to side a centimetre or two. One side is usually worse. Have the intention of pulling the cheek away for your butt crack, to loosen the tissue.



Adductors

The inner thighs are often particularly nasty and stuck. Lay over the roller with one leg out to the side, and drag the thigh across the roller, not up and down the length of your leg. A great adductor release can also be done by walking with a foam roller between your legs in a Pigeon toed, bent knee stance, creating a tensional slide and glide as you move.



Plantar Fascia

Getting the suspension system working under the foot is important for the whole body. Position a trigger point ball, or tennis ball under the arch of the foot and SLOWLY kneed and roll with your weight over the ball to help the tissue get more glide and hydration.

Key Movements

Full body integrated movements are ideal for creating whole body strength. There is no direct 'burn' in the muscles with whole body training because you are allowing the whole system to mitigate the force.



Lateral lunges & lateral movement

Great drills for loading the inner and outer hip at the same time to create a healthy pelvis. Our bodies are so efficient in the sagittal plane of movement (forward and back) that we often struggle to move laterally. Getting the inner thighs to load places healthy tension through the pelvic floor.



Curtsey Lunges

Curtsey lunges help load the glute, outer hip and help create space between the hips and sacrum. A simple step behind curtsey challenges the balance as well as builds strength, and enhances foot function. A curtsey also lengthens the outer hip and butt muscles, which are often shortened and stuck.



Squats with multiple foot prints

Doing squats with a different footprint helps feed your body with variable information. The more variety the better to help us create a strong body that can cope with the awkward angles of life. Remember repetition is the enemy of the body, so squatting the same every time isn't ideal.



Prone

When you are prone (face down) you are using gravity to load your core, and open up the front of your body. These exercises help restore much needed length through the front of the body after long periods of sitting. Great examples are TRX jack-knives, ViPR or Sandbell crawling drills, unloaded movement training like animal flow, crawling or ground to stand drills.



Loaded Movement Training

Means moving in all directions which helps us be stronger, more balanced, powerful and coordinated. When we train movement, there is a direct transfer to life, and less compressive forces through the body, which is ideal for pelvic floor health.



Warding Patterns

A movement where you apply external pressure to the body for no more than a 10 second hold. It can be done alone against an inanimate object, or with a partner. Warding upregulates the sensitivity of your nervous system with a by-product of feeling a great core burn. Warding patterns help teach your body to be reactive and train your to turn on and off!



Play

It's a great opportunity for subconscious movement which is great for the whole body and mind. Play creates an instantaneous relaxation of your body and mind, a synergy of body wide movement, and allows you to forget the stresses of your day. Play is so powerful for pain, fear and conditions like held tension, because it gives our body opportunities to let go.

Vibration Training and Release - Powerplate

The pelvic floor is deep tissue that is hard to reach, and as a result somewhere that often stores tension. We can easily stretch, mobilise, massage or foam roller our limbs or outer hips, but we can't release our pelvic floor. We rarely get our stomachs massaged, let alone the fascially rich areas of the pelvic floor, pubis and inner thigh. These areas build up dehydrated fascial tension and waste which can makes us move poorly, suffer bad posture, cripple digestion, increase menstrual cramps, headaches etc.

Massage to the area (we are talking about therapeutic, professional massage) might create more pain and tension (because it's awkward) than it's worth. It's helpful to introduce movement into the area in a non-confronting way. That's where Powerplate comes in to provide subtle movement to the region. Powerplate and other vibrational tools are powerful for releasing tension in the delicate deep soft tissues in the front of our bodies.



Powerplate in this position (as per the picture) is great for hydrating areas that don't get enough movement, circulation and stimulation. This Powerplate position often leaves you taller, feeling lighter, flatter stomach, and possibly needing to go to the toilet due to the huge circulation increase. The Powerplate vibrates in 3 dimensions to create variable force through this tissue. We commonly use 50 Hertz, at low amplitude, which is a speed faster than the muscles can contract, thus enhancing lymphatic drainage, circulation and fascial hydration. In other words, it upregulates the nutrients in, and helps pull the waste out!

The rush of hydration, stimulus and circulation to the area means the nervous system feedback loop is enhanced. The stuck stress in the area is moved away resulting in less pull through the region, thus permitting an open posture, and better breathing depth and efficiency. The huge vibration through the digestive tract stimulates movement through the bowels to help move waste though.

Aside from directly laying on the vibrational platform, additionally it is great at putting load through the pelvic floor while in a stationary position. Standing upon the platform creates up to 40 muscle contractions per second, in all planes of motion, powerfully helping train the body to work as an interconnected system the way it was designed.

Other Key Benefits:

- Increased bone density & muscle strength
- Weight loss
- Stress hormone reduction
- Increased growth hormone and testosterone
- Enhanced digestion
- Pain reduction & tissue hydration
- Increased flexibility & mobility
- Faster recovery
- Reduced swelling





Thanks for reading! This short eBook is a summary of pelvic floor health, and we hope you found it useful. Every single body is different, and we all have multiple factors which can affect our movement, posture and health. Please feel free to reach out to us for more specific help on your unique situation.

Priscilla & Nathan Flynn
www.in2greatfitness.com.au
info@in2greatfitness.com.au

