

What to Expect At Your Pelvic Floor Physiotherapy Appointment

Purpose: To determine how your pelvic floor muscles may be contributing to your symptoms. The Physiotherapist will provide you with some exercises, education, and resources during the appointment, but the focus will be mainly on **assessment**.

Interview

Your appointment will start with questions about your symptoms.

Why? To help the physiotherapist gain a better understanding of what you have been experiencing so they know how best to structure the assessment.

Example questions include:

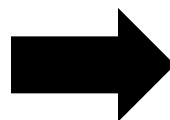
How long have you had your symptoms?

When do you feel them?

Where do you feel them?

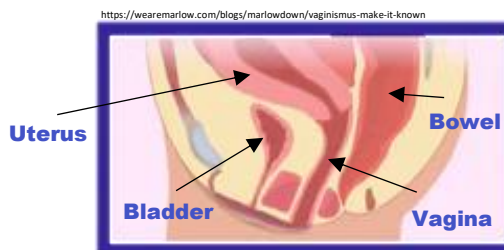
How would you describe the sensation?

How much do you know about the pelvic floor muscles (e.g. Where are they? What do they do?)



Education

Pelvic floor muscle tension is increased for many individuals with vulvar/vaginal pain. Since these muscles surround the vaginal canal, involuntary tightening/contraction of the pelvic floor muscles can make the vaginal canal and opening appear smaller so it is more difficult and painful for something to enter.



Vaginal canal & opening
when the pelvic floor
muscles are **relaxed**



Vaginal canal & opening
when the pelvic floor
muscles are
tightening/contracting

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Physical Exam

Surface EMG Biofeedback

What? A type of machine that records the activity of your pelvic floor muscles and shows it to you on a graph.

How? EMG biofeedback is similar to a heart rate monitor.

Set-up: Three stickers are applied to the skin, which are attached to wires and the biofeedback unit. The stickers are placed on the inner thigh and over a section of your pelvic floor muscles (externally). The machine will not shock or zap you! You shouldn't feel anything apart from where the stickers are placed

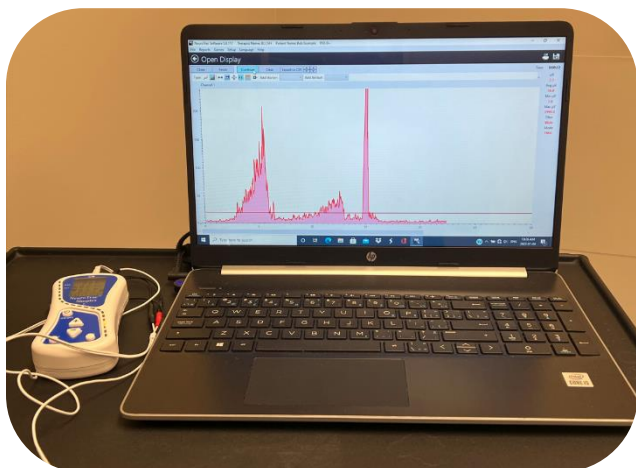


Vaginal Exam

Why? To find where the painful or uncomfortable areas are and to see how your pelvic floor muscles react.

How? The physiotherapist will use the end of one finger covered in lubricant to touch the vaginal opening. Depending on your comfort level, the physiotherapist may also ask to feel internally in order to get a better sense of pelvic floor muscle tension or activity.

Note: The physiotherapist will ask for your permission to proceed with the exam both during and throughout.



Vaginal Inserts

If you have your own set of vaginal inserts/accommodators/dilators, please bring these to your appointment. If you do not own your own set, there is no need to purchase them ahead of time. The physiotherapist will discuss what these are at your appointment and how they may be helpful for treating your

<https://urologyhealthstore.ca/products/full-vaginal-dilator-sizing-set>

