

PRE & POSTNATAL PELVIC FLOOR INTRO GUIDE



Beyond Birthing

Hello mamma :)

My name is Sophie Villeneuve and I am a Pelvic Health Physiotherapist & Birth Healing Specialist. My goal is to help you **prepare AND recover from birth while nailing your PELVIC HEALTH!** And you know what, it is absolutely possible, and I am going to show you how!

In this book, I will give you a little intro about pelvic health and why we make such a big deal out of it during and after pregnancy. The idea is to get started with your learning so you can keep your pelvis happy during pregnancy and beyond :) I do not want any of you ladies contacting me 20 years down the road with pelvic floor issues that could have been solved with a bit of prevention work! Deal? Alright.

Oh, also, feel free to send me a DM on Insta or comment on one of my YouTube videos if you have any questions about anything! I truly love connecting with all of you on social media - this makes my job so much more interesting! I learn as much from you as you do from me, I am 100% sure!

Enjoy the book and talk soon :)

xx

Sophie



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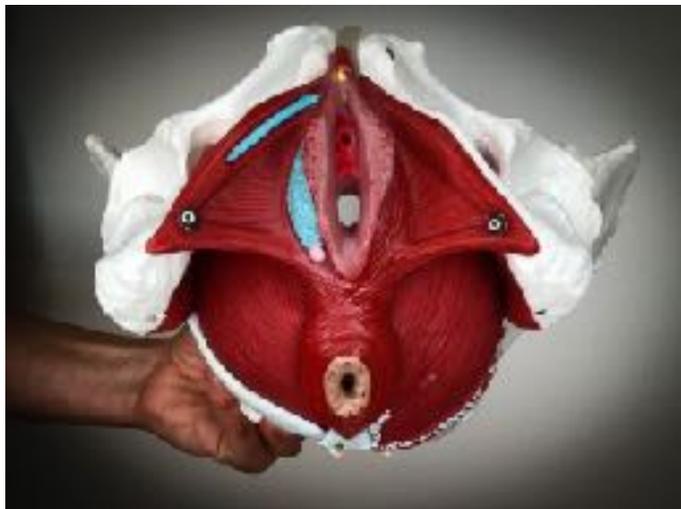


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Pelvic Floor: what is it?

First, let me introduce you to your new best friend in your mommy's pelvic



health journey: **your pelvic floor.**

The pelvic floor is like a hammock of muscles and ligaments located at the bottom of your pelvis. It goes around your vagina, anus and urethra.



What does it do?

- **Supports** your bladder, uterus, vagina and rectum
- Provides **stability** to your pelvis, hips, and back
- Helps at controlling **urination** and **bowel movement**
- Plays a role in sexual function by contracting during **orgasm**

Watch my [PELVIC FLOOR 101 IN 5 MINUTES](#) video for a better overview!

Through pregnancy & childbirth, many factors can affect your pelvic floor's health:

- Hormonal and postural changes
- The weight of your baby growing on top of your pelvis
- Labor & delivery challenges the pelvic floor in many ways - the most uneventful birth is still a physical "trauma" on your pelvis!

The fact that you are getting informed about pelvic health right now is already so amazing!! Congrats on taking that step!

Knowing how to take care of your pelvic floor during and after pregnancy will get you ahead of the game in preventing pelvic issues!

Symptoms of pelvic floor dysfunctions

Because of everything that is going on in your pelvis during pregnancy & childbirth, the following symptoms may arise during and/or after delivery (regardless if you had a vaginal or belly birth):

- ➔Urine leakage (with sneezing, coughing, laughing, running or on the way to the bathroom)
- ➔Strong sensation that you need to urinate (urgency)
- ➔Sensation that something is falling out of your vagina, or that your pelvic floor is “feeling low”
- ➔Difficulty to hold gas or stool
- ➔Painful sex
- ➔Pain with bowel movement
- ➔Pelvic, low back, tailbone or hip pain

**Although these symptoms are COMMON,
it does not mean they are NORMAL.**

If you present these symptoms, I recommend consulting with a Pelvic Health Physiotherapist so you can get a thorough assessment of your condition and specific guidance about your treatment

If you do not have access to a Pelvic Health Physiotherapist, you may want to check out my [Youtube Channel Beyond Birthing](#) which has tons of information to help you manage your symptoms - a new video is released every 2 weeks! Also, I love having suggestions of topics to cover on my channel, so if you have any ideas of subjects that I have not covered, please DM me on Insta!

What is a “Kegel”?

What we call a "Kegel" exercise is basically a pelvic floor muscle contraction.

To perform your first Kegel, try this:

1. **Pretend that you want to pick up a berry with your vagina and lift it up inside your pelvis.** It should feel like a squeeze and a lift from the muscles around your vagina and anus.
2. Hold the contraction x 3-5 few secs.
3. **Release the berry and pretend to bring it back back down,** allowing the muscles around your vagina to relax and open as a flower blooming.



Berry picking with your vagina does not speak to you?

[Watch my Youtube video “5 different cues to engage your pelvic floor”](#)

for other ideas of how to connect with these tricky muscles!

Improve the quality of your Kegels

Get more feedback: Insert 1 or 2 fingers in your vagina. Feel the muscles around your fingers squeezing and releasing.

Get rid of any other muscle compensations: Make sure you **do not** engage your inner thigh muscles, your butt muscles (gluts) or any muscles of your upper body. No one should tell, by looking at you, that you are doing a Kegel!

For more info, visit my Youtube channel and watch my [Pelvic Floor Foundational videos!](#)

Kegels during and after pregnancy: how many?

- Practicing pelvic floor exercises during and after pregnancy can be a good way to keep your pelvic floor in shape and prevent pelvic symptoms, as well as bounce back faster after your delivery.
- During pregnancy specifically, we want to work at “releasing” the pelvic floor as much as possible and make it nice and flexible to help baby to come through during the pushing stage!
- The best is to consult with a Pelvic Health Physiotherapist before starting Kegel exercises, so you know exactly if they are right for you depending on the state of your pelvic floor. It is especially recommended to consult if you present any pelvic symptoms such as urine leakage, painful sex, sensation that something is falling out of your vagina, bowel control or pelvic pain.
- But as a general rule of thumb, for women who have healthy pelvic floors, I normally recommend to do **1-2 sets of 10 Kegels/day during pregnancy, as well as for the first few weeks after delivery (regardless of your delivery mode)**. Hold the contraction for 3-5 secs, and relax for 2 full breaths. The idea with relaxing for a longer period of time is to avoid creating tensions in your pelvic floor before birth.

Congrats on completing your introduction to pelvic health!!!

Here is what you learned:

- **Your pelvic floor is a sling of muscles located at the bottom of your pelvis. It helps with urine and bowel control, orgasm, pelvic stability and pelvic organ support.**
- **The pelvic floor is challenged during pregnancy due to all the physical and hormonal changes happening in your body, but also through labor and delivery due to your baby moving down in your pelvis and going through the vaginal canal.**
- **Pelvic health symptoms can include urinary leakage, bowel issues, pain & pelvic heaviness or prolapse.**
- **By exercising your pelvic floor during and after pregnancy, you can get ahead of the game on preventing long term pelvic health symptoms :)**

I am excited to guide you further in your prenatal preparation & postpartum recovery :) Check out my [programs & resources](#) if you are interested in working with me (i.e. nail your pelvic health during pregnancy and beyond hihi!)

Thank you so much for trusting me as your pelvic health coach today :)

xx

Sophie



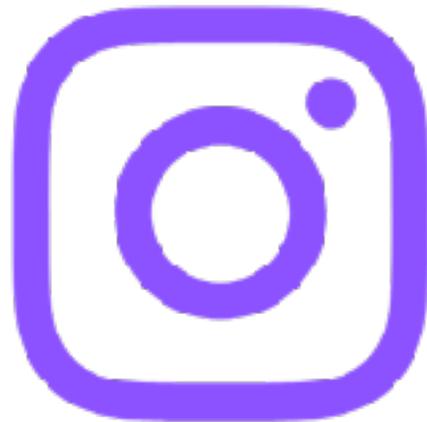
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every mother deserves a lifelong pelvic health



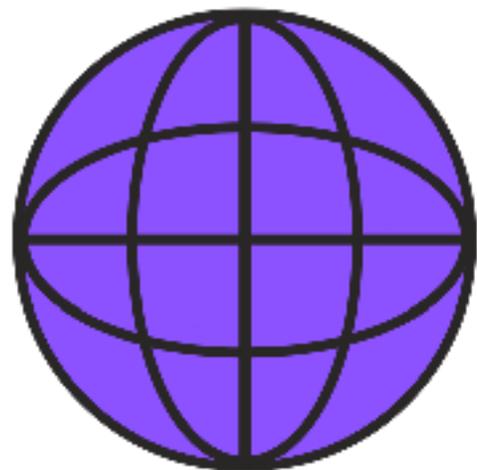
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