

WEEK 2

POST PARTUM FLOOR & CORE AWARENESS PROGRAM

Safely heal your body
from birth



RETURNING TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AFTER BABY

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AFTER BABY

PLAN

1. Check in
2. Pelvic floor exercise: strengthening different areas
3. Core exercise: building up endurance
4. Which activities are safe to do in the 4th trimester?
5. How to return to physical activities while supporting your healing

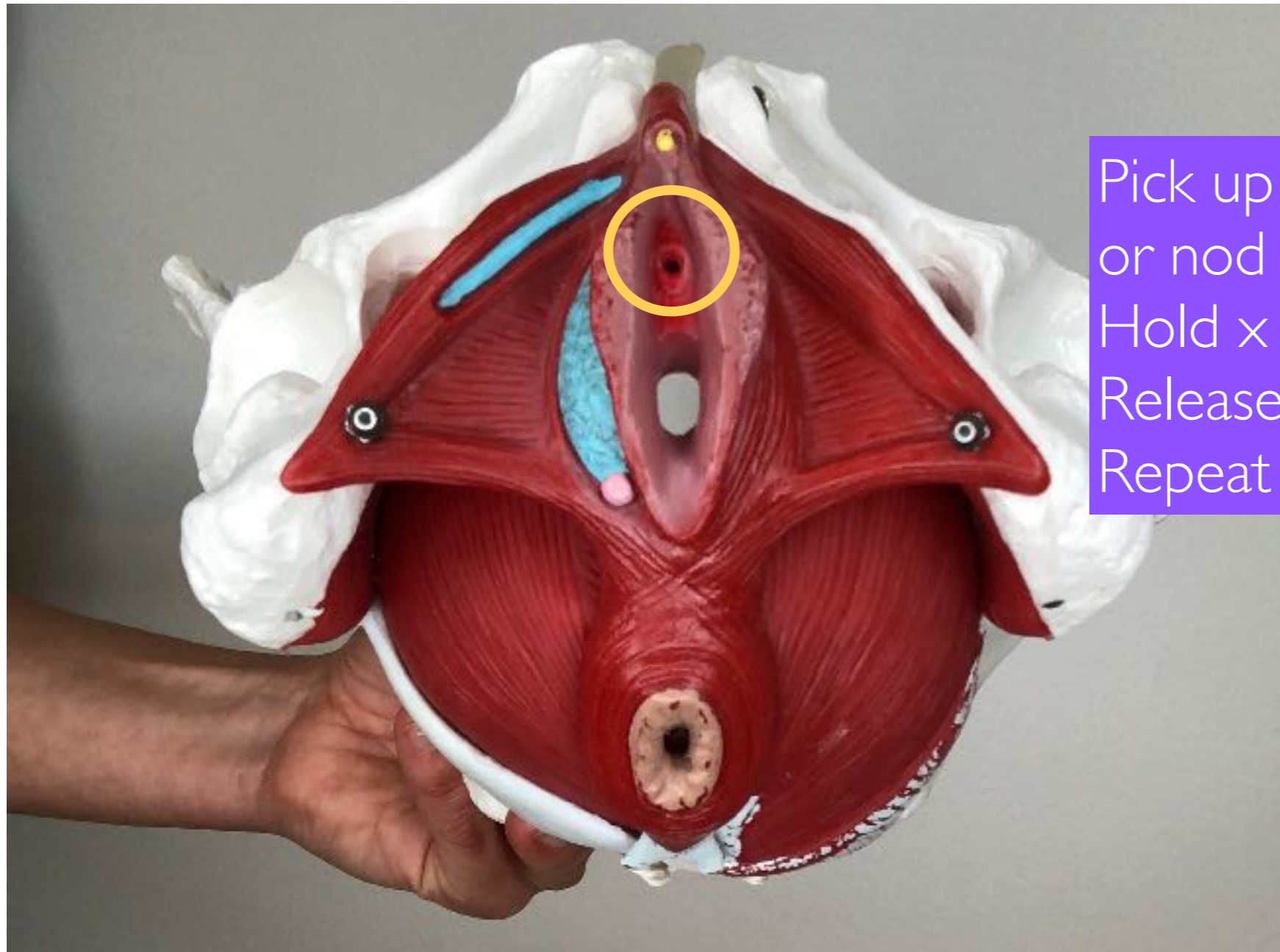
CHECK IN

What are you WINS this week?

What is has been CHALLENGING?

PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISE - CONTRACTING DIFFERENT AREAS

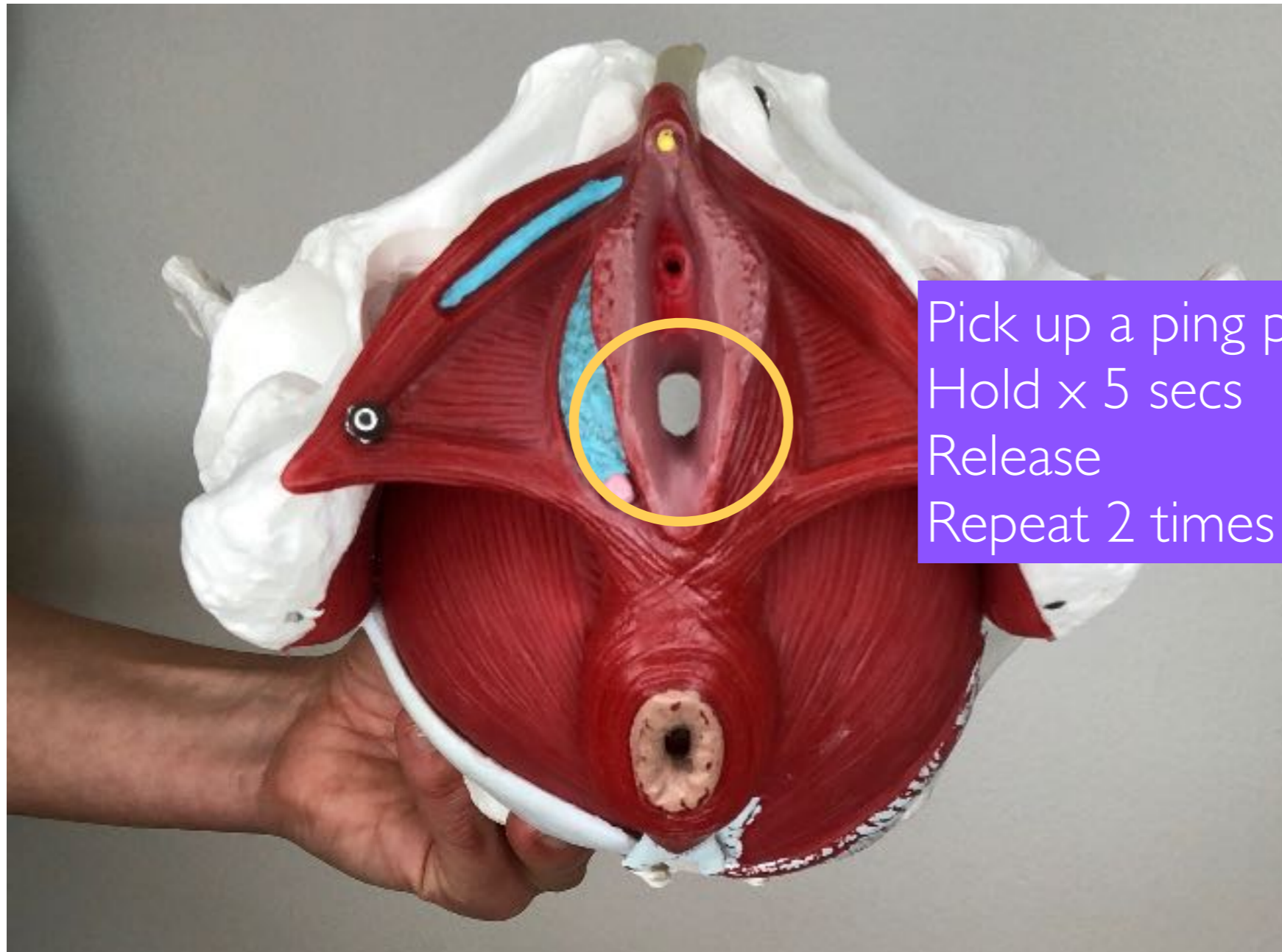
Can you squeeze the front triangle of your pelvic floor?



Pick up a raisin with your urethra
or nod your clitoris
Hold x 5 secs
Release
Repeat 2 times

PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISE - CONTRACTING DIFFERENT AREAS

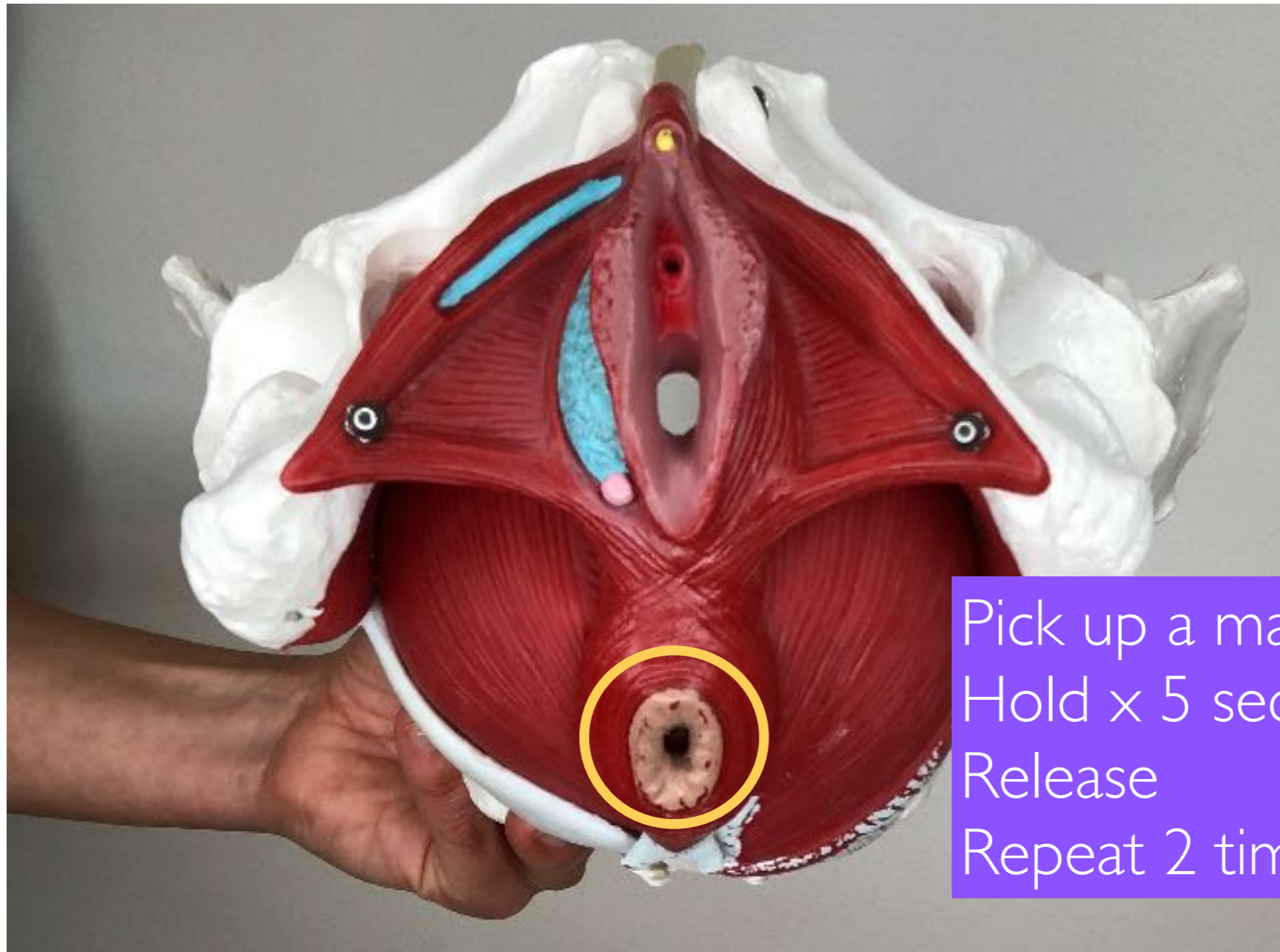
Can you squeeze the middle part of your pelvic floor?



Pick up a ping pong ball with your vagina
Hold x 5 secs
Release
Repeat 2 times

PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISE - CONTRACTING DIFFERENT AREAS

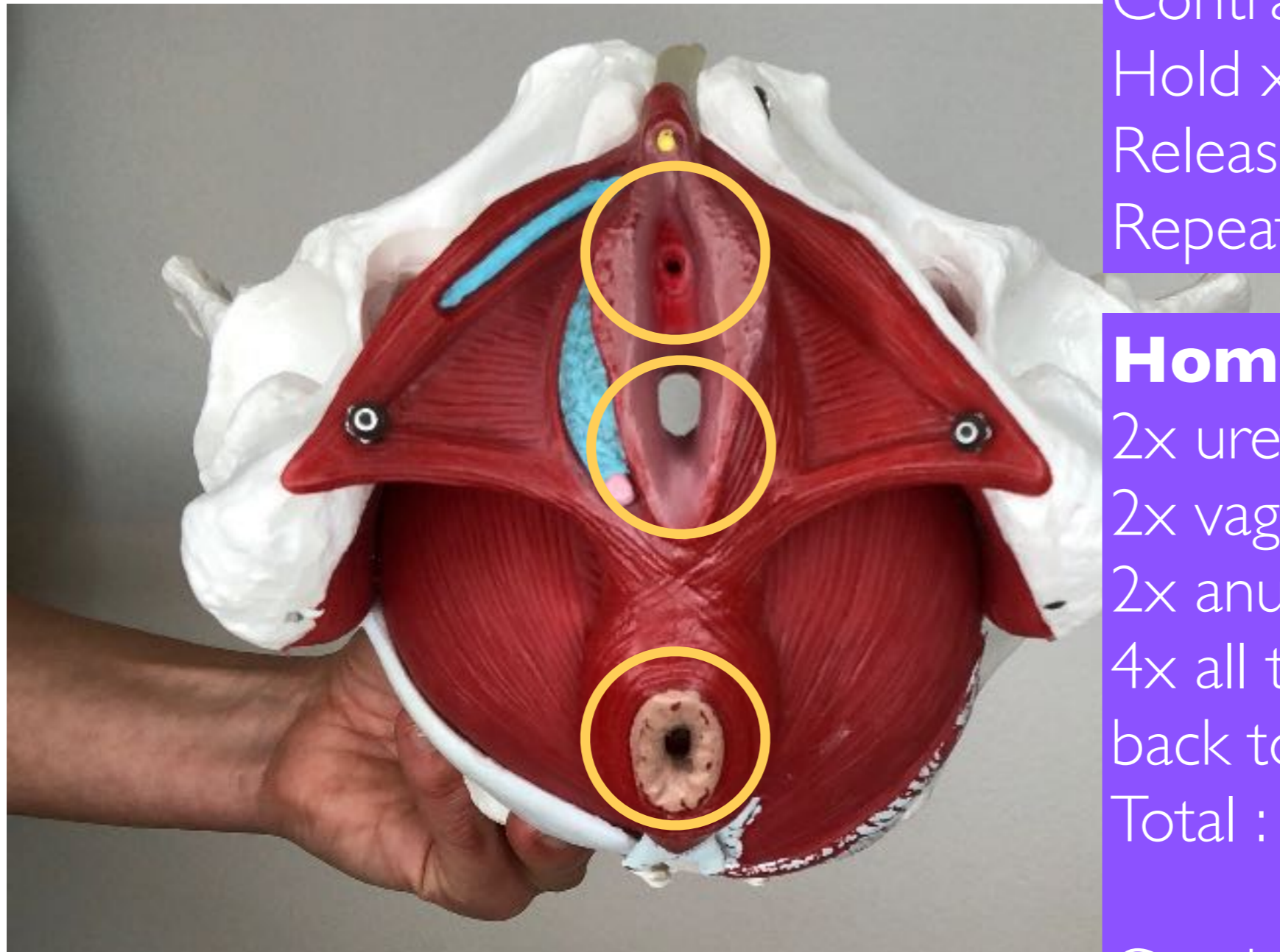
Can you squeeze the back triangle of your pelvic floor?



Pick up a marble with your anus
Hold x 5 secs
Release
Repeat 2 times

PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISE - CONTRACTING DIFFERENT AREAS

Can you squeeze the 3 areas together?



Contract the 3 areas together
Hold x 5 secs
Release
Repeat 4 times

Homework

2x urethra

2x vagina

2x anus

4x all together (try
back to front and front to back)

Total : 10 reps, 2 sets / day

Continue to use Squeezy app!

DEEP CORE ENDURANCE BUILD UP

LEVEL I

1. In sitting position (either on exercise ball or on a seat)
2. Take in breath and feel your abdomen rising
3. On the out breath, engage your deep core and bring the navel towards the spine to flatten the abdomen

4. Hold for 2-3 breaths

5. Release
6. Repeat 10 times

***exercise ball can be against the wall for more stability**



DEEP CORE ENDURANCE BUILD UP

ADDING MOVEMENT

Basic principles for deep core strengthening

A: Abdomen flat (no doming)

B: Breathing (no breath holding)

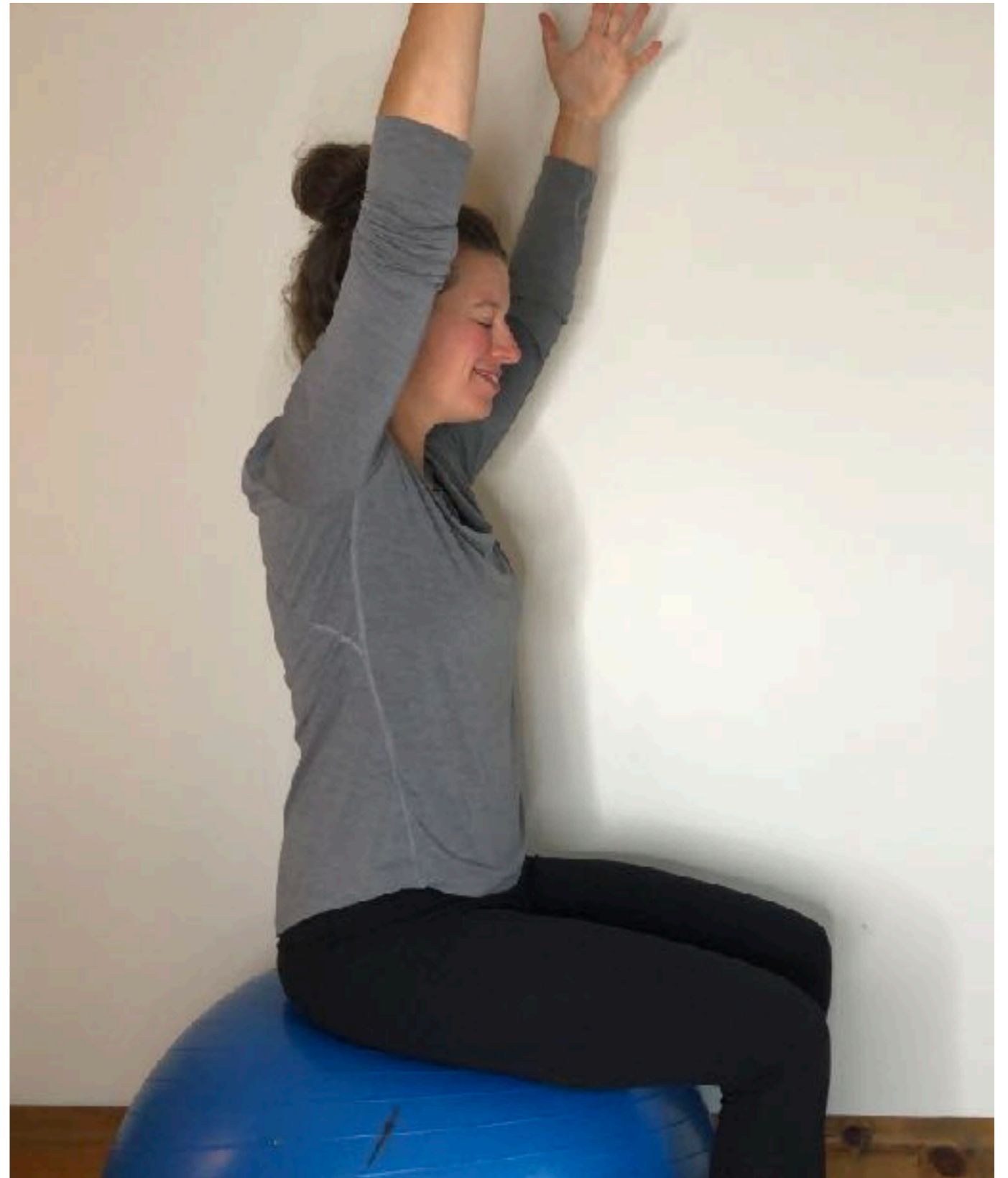
S: Stability (no back arching)

DEEP CORE ENDURANCE BUILD UP

LEVEL 2

1. Take breath in
2. On the out breath, engage deep core as you lift your arms up
3. Hold x 2-3 breaths
4. Release
5. Repeat 10 times

***exercise ball can be against the wall for more stability**



DEEP CORE ENDURANCE BUILD UP

LEVEL 3

1. Engage your core
2. March on the spot while keeping core engaged
6. 10 reps (5/leg)

***exercise ball can be against the wall for more stability**



DEEP CORE ENDURANCE BUILD UP

LEVEL 4

1. Engage your core
2. Lift arms up
3. March on the spot
4. 10 reps (5/leg)

***exercise ball can be against the wall for more stability**

Homework

2-3 sets / day



DEEP CORE ENDURANCE BUILD UP

Core homework

Session: 2-3 sets of up to 10 reps

Frequency: Daily or at least 3-4x/week to get results

Which level to start with?

- Feels challenging / fatigued after 10 reps
- But still meet **ABS** criteria
 - A: abdomen flat
 - B: breathing
 - S: stability (back)
- You can warm up with easier level, and do 2 sets of challenging level after

4th TRIMESTER: WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE SAFE TO DO?

Start with low impact activities after 3-4 weeks pp

Wait minimum 12 weeks before returning to high impact (running, jumping)



LOW IMPACT =

Elliptical

Walking / hiking

Biking

Swimming

Postnatal yoga - Sarah Beth

Weight lifting (start with baby's weight)

Body weight workouts

Low impact fitness workouts

HOW TO RETURN TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES?

#1 TEST PHASE

Goal: determine your safe zone (symptom-free zone)

Symptoms

urine leaks

urinary urgency

vaginal pressure

pelvic floor feeling “low”

perineum pain

c-section scar pain

hip/pelvic pain

HOW TO RETURN TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES?

TEST PHASE

- **Walks**
 - Start with walking x 10-15 min, or *whichever duration you have been walking with no symptoms to this date*
 - No symptoms during or after: add 5-10 min next time
- **Other activities: home workouts, bike, etc**
 - Start with a 10-15 minutes session
 - No symptoms during or after: add 5-10 min next time
- Repeat (add 5-10 min at a time) until you feel symptoms either during the activity, or throughout the day after the activity

HOW TO RETURN TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES?

TEST PHASE

- *Contributors*
 - time of the day
 - errands, house chores, other standing tasks before the activity
 - level of energy (ex: bad night of sleep)
 - Load on your body (ex: baby in carrier vs stroller, using weights vs not in workouts)

Try and maintain same conditions throughout the test phase

Conditions should be aligned with what you are aiming for, your routine, lifestyle and environment

TEST PHASE RESULTS

Identifying your safe zone

What is the maximal amount of time you can perform the activity without symptoms (during and after)?



HOW TO RETURN TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES?

BUILD UP

Goal: work within your safe zone and build up from there

1. Perform the activity for a full week (or 5 sessions) within your safe zone.
2. If no symptoms, increase by 5-10 minutes. If symptoms, continue with previous duration.
3. Repeat and build up every week or every 5 sessions.

CASE STUDY #1

Marie is 3 weeks pp after a vaginal delivery.

She started going for walks this week, and has been experiencing an increase in vaginal pressure since then. She does not have symptoms during the walk, but feels uncomfortable by the end of the day and has to lie down by dinner time.

Her walks are 30 minutes with baby in the carrier. She walks on trails so she can exercise the dog at the same time. Her husband is at work during the day and they have no family to support them.

What can Marie do to reduce her symptoms while still supporting her goal to walk daily?

CASE STUDY #1 - what do you think?

CASE STUDY #1

- Identify her safe zone first : maybe 30 min is too much?
- *Modify accordingly.....*
 - Duration
 - Load: carrier vs stroller
 - Breaks along the way

CASE STUDY #2

Sylvie is 6 weeks pp after an emergency c-section.

She has no symptoms in her daily activities, and was clear by her doctor to start working out. She did not consult a pelvic health PT, as she did not have a vaginal delivery.

She started 20-min *Beach Body workout* videos which she was doing prior to pregnancy with no issues. She noticed urinary urgency and mild leaks with jumping jacks, as well as tugging sensation around the c-section site during crunches.

She is wondering what to do to continue working out without symptoms.

What are your suggestions for Sylvie ?

CASE STUDY #2 - what do you think?

CASE STUDY #2

- Use postpartum specific workouts which typically do not involve intense core exercises and high impact
- Substitute high impact for low impact alternative
- Stop crunches/planks and get assessed by Pelvic Health PT
- Focus on upper and lower body strengthening for now until further assessment is done