

WEEK 4

POST PARTUM FLOOR & CORE AWARENESS PROGRAM

Safely heal your body
from birth



RETURNING TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AFTER BABY

PLAN

1. Check in
2. Social invite
3. Survey
4. Return to sex after baby
5. Pelvic floor exercises: in standing position
6. Core exercises: no wall support progression

START RECORDING

SOCIAL INVITE

If you would like to meet for a
mom & baby social

**Meet @ 1:30 PM next Tuesday, August 17th,
in the parking lot at Rotary Park!**

If it is raining,
it will be postponed to the following Tuesday!

I am not going to be there
as I am flying home to see my family (yay!!)
but you are welcome to meet up without me!

SURVEY

I would love to get your feedback about this course as I working on a pre-recorded version that women can start as soon as they enter their postpartum journey.

Your answers will help at improving the program and make sure mamas feel confident, empowered and supported through their postpartum recovery.

The survey will be sent by email this week, and we would love to get all the responses back before next Tuesday.

Thank you so much!

THEME OF THE WEEK
SEX LIFE AFTER CHILDBIRTH



WHAT ARE YOUR CHALLENGES ABOUT RETURNING TO **SEX AFTER BABY?**

Definition of sex

any type of sexual interaction
(not exclusive to penetrative intercourse)

Ex: masturbation, kisses & cuddles, oral sex, etc

WHAT ARE YOUR CHALLENGES ABOUT RETURNING TO **SEX AFTER BABY?**

**Breakout rooms
15 minutes**

***Before returning to the main room:
**identify which teammate will share
your answers to the group*****

*If you are watching the replay: take a few minutes to pause the recording
and reflect on the subject*

STOP RECORDING

WHAT DID YOUR TEAM COME UP WITH?

- Core being pushed on
- Csection scar: apprehension
- Core stability
- Busy
- Worried about pain
- Finding time without baby
- Mental and physical energy that it takes (exhaustion)
- Lack of privacy (guests and visitors)
- History of painful sex
- Breast - feeling not their own
- Body image
- Painful sex

START RECORDING



MOMS

- Lack of sleep & exhaustion
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Lack of time
- Pelvic health challenges (prolapse, incontinence, perineal pain, gas, csection pain)
- Vaginal dryness
- Breast pain
- Body image
- Milk let down with arousal/orgasm - feeling self conscious
- Psychological challenges (anxiety, depression, stress)
- Feeling “out touched”
- Birth trauma
- Transition into motherhood: perception of self as no more sexual
- Lack of privacy
- Contraception concerns
- If no sex during pregnancy: even more challenging to “get back into it”

DADS

- Lack of sleep & exhaustion
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Lack of time
- **Fear of hurting their partner**
- Body image
- Psychological challenges (anxiety, depression, stress)
- **Feeling helpless, sense of purpose**
- **Transition into fatherhood** & stress associated with change of routine
- Lack of privacy
- Contraception concerns
- **Feeling left aside, intimacy needs unmet**
- **Jealousy of infant-mom bond**

Return to sex after childbirth

Resuming intercourse after delivery: when?

Earliest time

- Risk of infection / haemorrhage is minimal after 2 weeks
- Clinically, **6 weeks after delivery is the earliest** if perineal tears are healed (vaginal birth) and there is no bleeding anymore (c-section, vaginal birth)

Statistics

74% of couples return to sex **3-4 months** postpartum in average

How often do people have sex after baby?

Frequency

50% of couples have sex 1-2x/month up to a year postpartum

Compared to 14% who have sex 1-2x/month before baby

Conclusion:

Your sex frequency may decrease in the first year postpartum compared to before

Return to sex after childbirth

STEP-BY-STEP

#1: Look at your vulva

Regardless of your delivery mode, I recommend doing this.
Use mirror or phone in selfie mode

Notice: what is the same as before?

What is different?

Normal changes include...

Presence of scar tissue

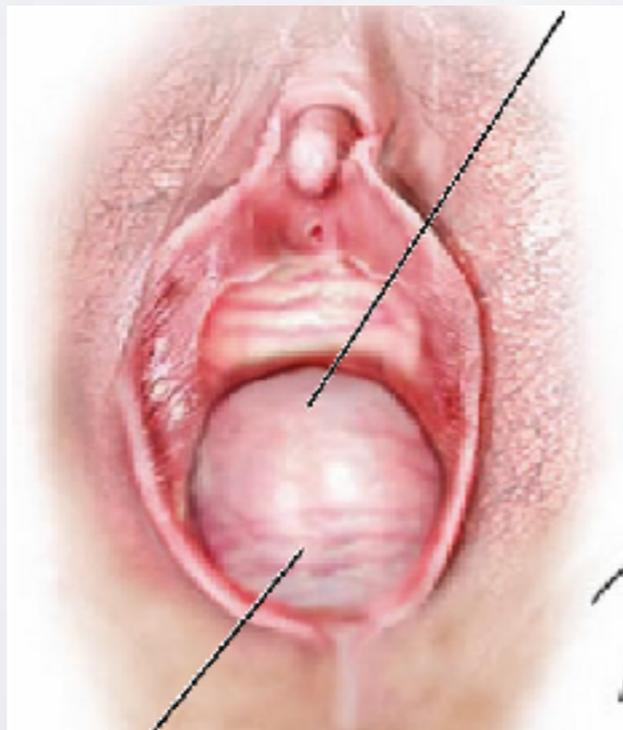
bumps/flaps in the skin at the opening
this can be sensitive on touch

Muscle atrophy (lack of tone) on the labias

comes back to normal once breastfeeding is over

In some cases

Prolapse / bulge at the vaginal opening



If you are not sure what is normal or not, consult with a Pelvic Health PT

#2: Touch

Gently touch the labias,
around the clitoris, the perineum

How does it feel?

Acknowledge the areas that feel okay

Identify the ones that are more sensitive

#3: Self-pleasure

Engage in self-pleasure (masturbation) on your own first

**Is there anything that feels
different than before?**

New things that feel good?

Things that used to feel good but no longer do?

Take mental note so you can share with your partner
when the time comes

#4: Insertion and internal exploration

Using plenty of lubricant,
try inserting your finger or a small sex toy if you have one.
Make sure your legs and pelvic floor are relaxed.

Does it feel ok?
Is there any discomfort at the opening?
Deeper in?

If one finger feels okay,
try inserting two fingers, or a larger sex toy if you have one

Assess the space of the vaginal opening:
is it tight around your 2 fingers or is there extra space?

#5: Address pelvic floor tightness as needed

If tightness and not enough space at the opening, watch my video about **vaginal dilators on Youtube**



If you found sensitive area at the opening (around the perineum), **massage your perineal tear** using the instructions in this video



#5: Get back into intimacy without intercourse

Discuss with your partner

How do both of you feel about resuming intercourse?

What are your fears?

What are the options/solutions for each of them?

Make a plan together

Ex: I would like to wait a few more weeks before trying intercourse, but I would like to be intimate with you in other ways and plan time alone together every week

*It is normal to have to “schedule” intimacy and sex for the first little while after having a baby!

Plan on a date

Ask your support to take care of the baby for a few hours

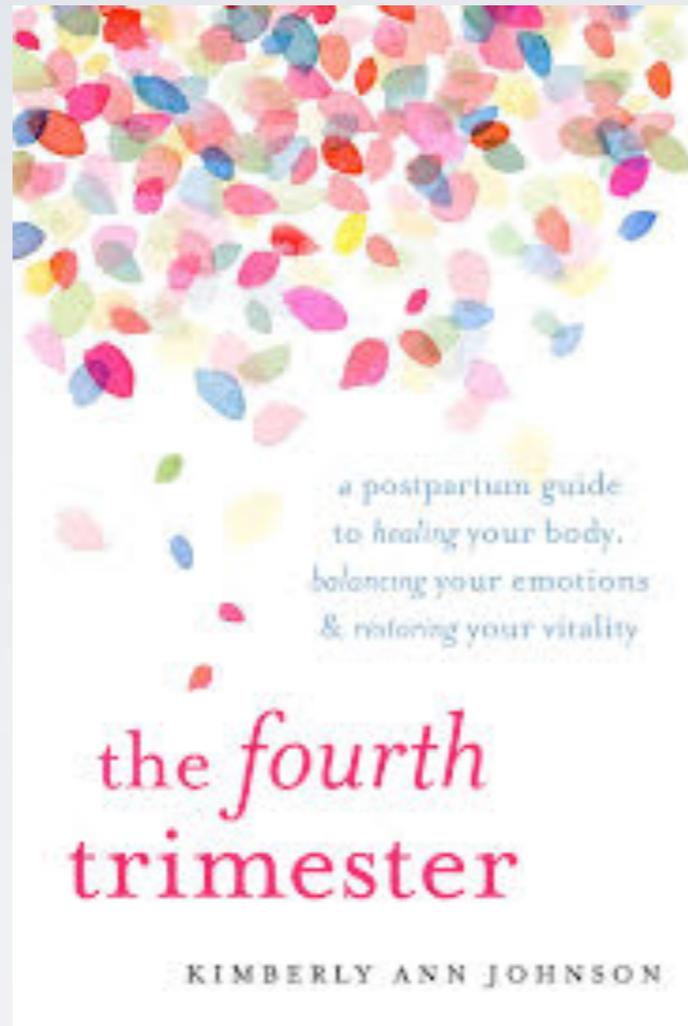
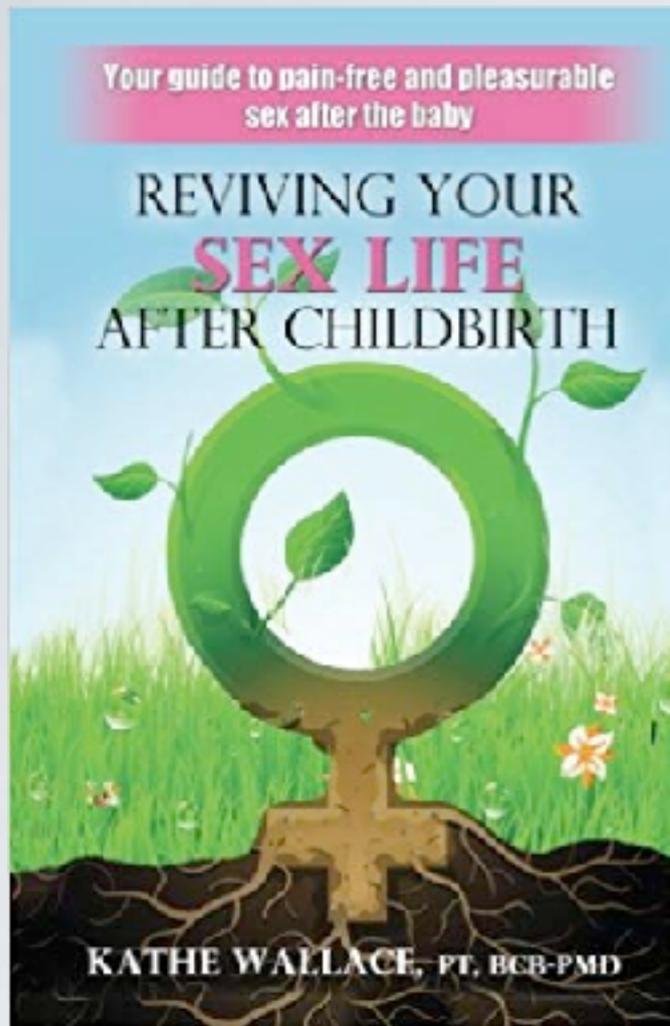
Use this opportunity to be intimate with each other

Cuddling & kissing are also part of intimacy, it does not need to include intercourse

#6 : Intercourse

- Choose a moment where you can fully focus on this moment with your partner
- Share with your partner what they can or cannot do depending on your findings (ex: sensitive areas to avoid)
- Use lubricant to prevent vaginal dryness (if breastfeeding or pumping)
- Foreplay ++ : your vagina is bigger when you are aroused!
- Set low expectations & goals for your first session: just try penetration and see how it goes
- Release your pelvic floor during penetration - do not squeeze - think of a flower blooming, letting go of the berry
- Keep the communication open with your partner as you go

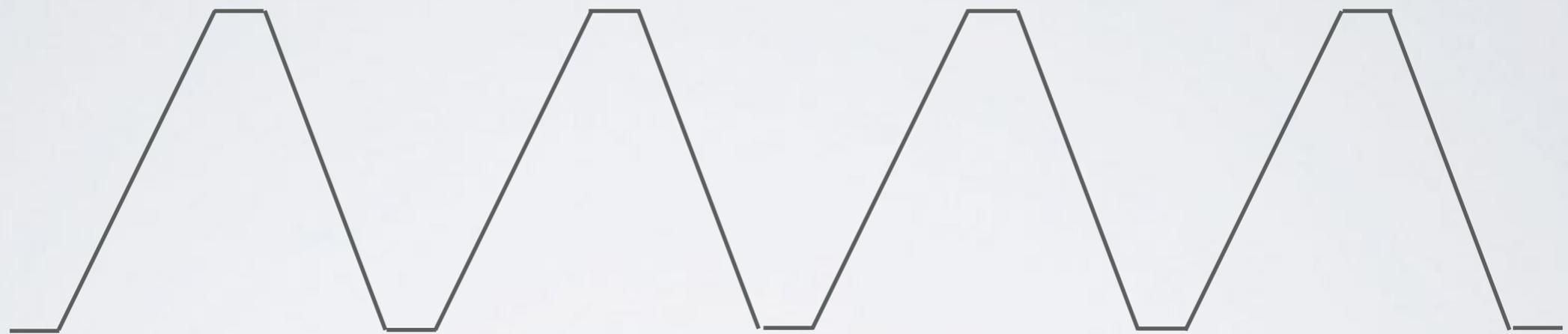
LEARN MORE



Watch my **Youtube** video with sex coach Sofia Fortin about returning to sex after baby

PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISE #1: QUICK SQUEEZE

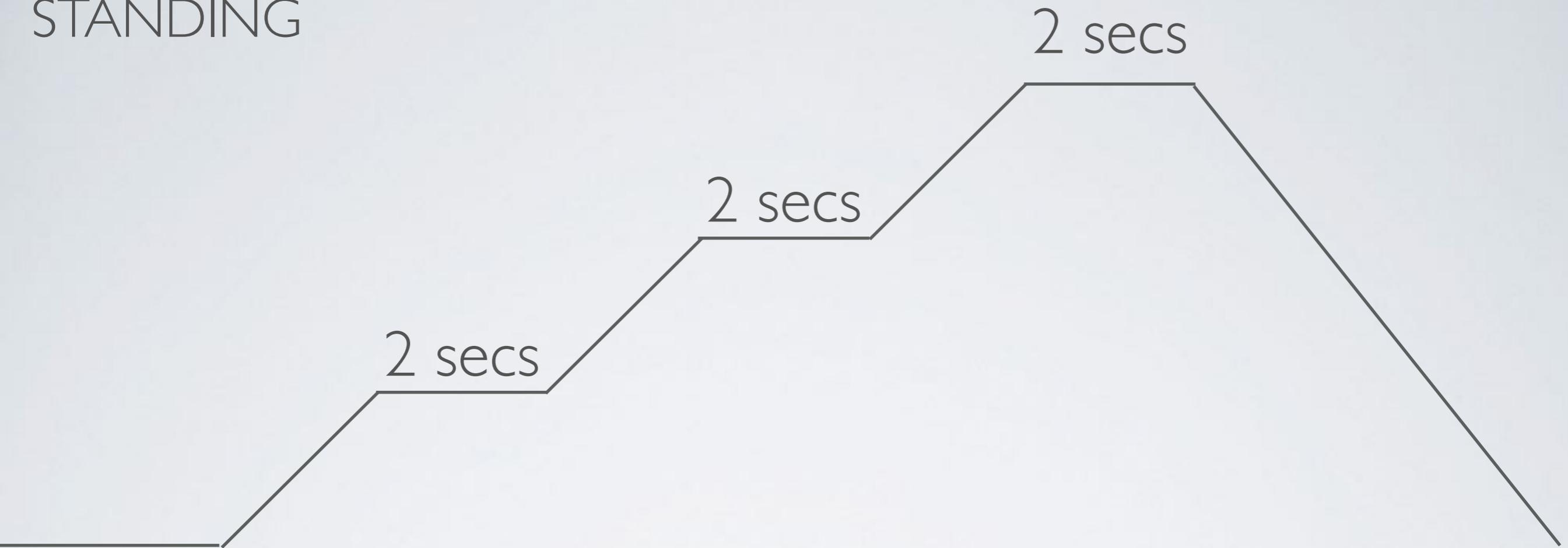
STANDING



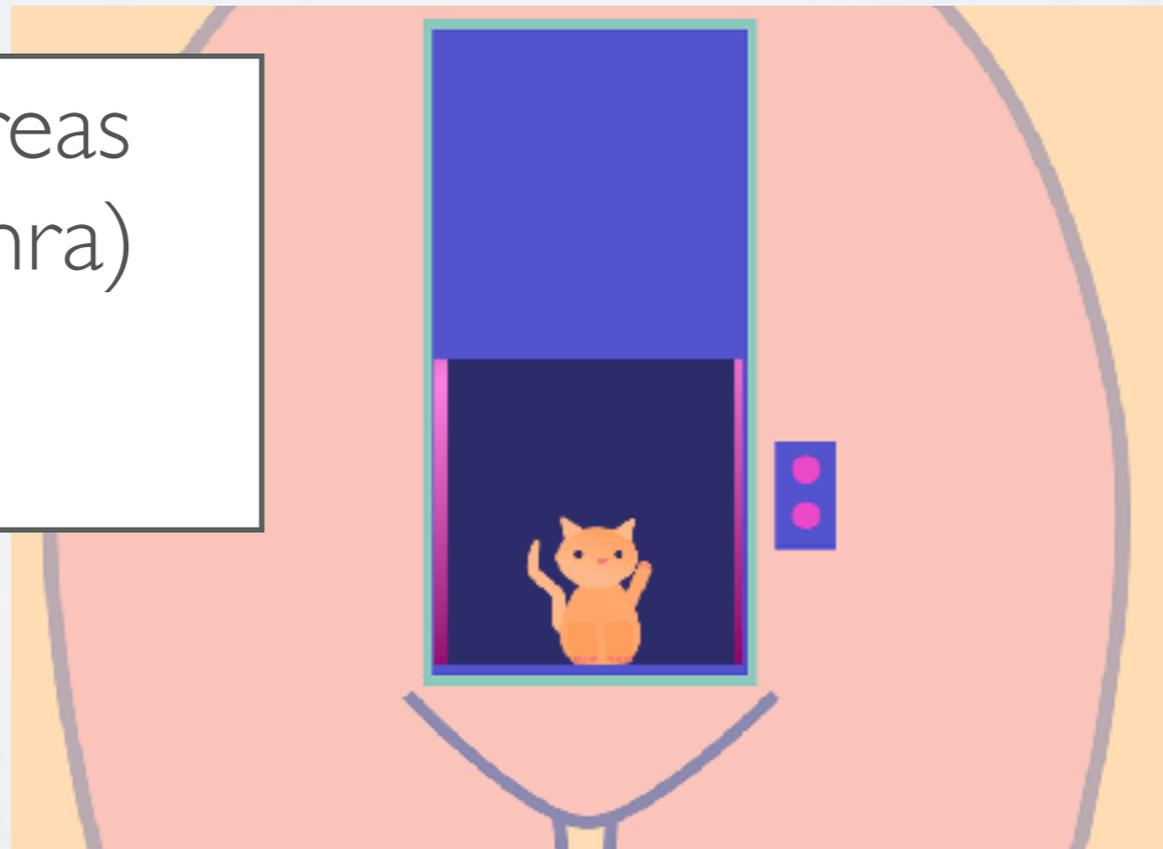
2 secs on / 2 secs off
Repeat 5-10x daily
In standing position

PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISE #2: ELEVATOR

STANDING



Practice with 3 areas
(anus/vagina/urethra)
10 reps
2 sets a day



RE-ASSESS DIASTASIS RECTI



How many fingers can you fit
At the belly button (or slightly above): _____
1 inch over the belly button: _____
1 inch below the belly button: _____

Compare findings to beginning of program

If still separated, check in with pelvic health PT and continue progressing your exercises

CORE EXERCISE #1: DEAD BUG POSITION

(NO MOVEMENT, NO WALL SUPPORT)

1. Engage deep core
2. Hold the position for 10 breaths

A: Abdomen flat

B: Breath

S: Stability (back)



CORE EXERCISE #2: STADIUM WAVE (NO WALL)

1. Take breath in
2. On the out breath, engage deep core as you lift your arms up
3. Inhale as you come back up
4. Come back to initial position
6. Repeat 10 times

A: Abdomen flat
B: Breath
S: Stability (back)

Starting position



CORE EXERCISE #3: MODIFIED BICYCLE

1. Engage deep core
2. Mini bicycle movement working in the range where you can keep abdomen flat and the back flat against the floor
3. Until you feel tired or cannot maintain ABS principles

*Tip: keep your hands in the lower back to verify back tilt (should not occur)



A: Abdomen flat
B: Breath
S: Stability (back)

CORE EXERCISE #4: MODIFIED PLANK

1. Supporter on counter top
2. Shoulders, hips, ankles aligned
3. Deep core engaged
4. Hold for 10 breaths

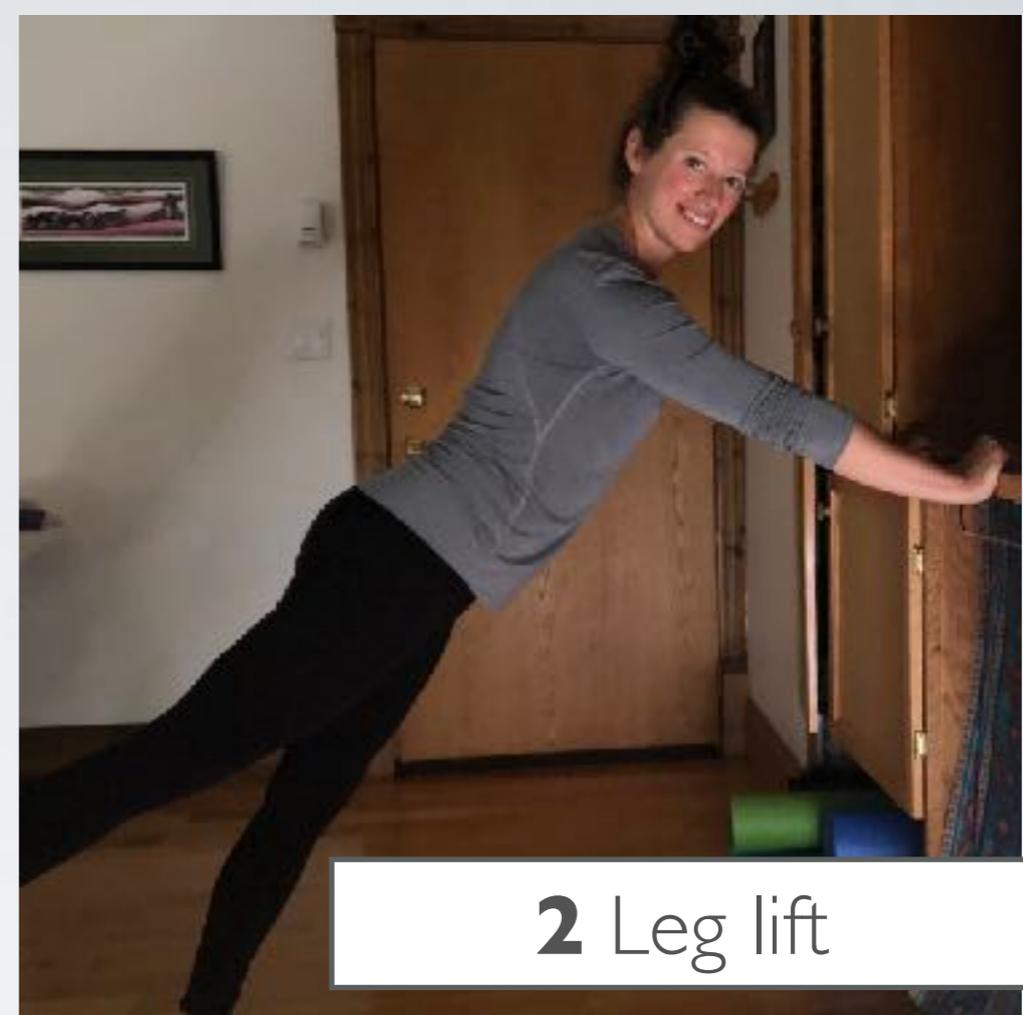
A: Abdomen flat

B: Breath

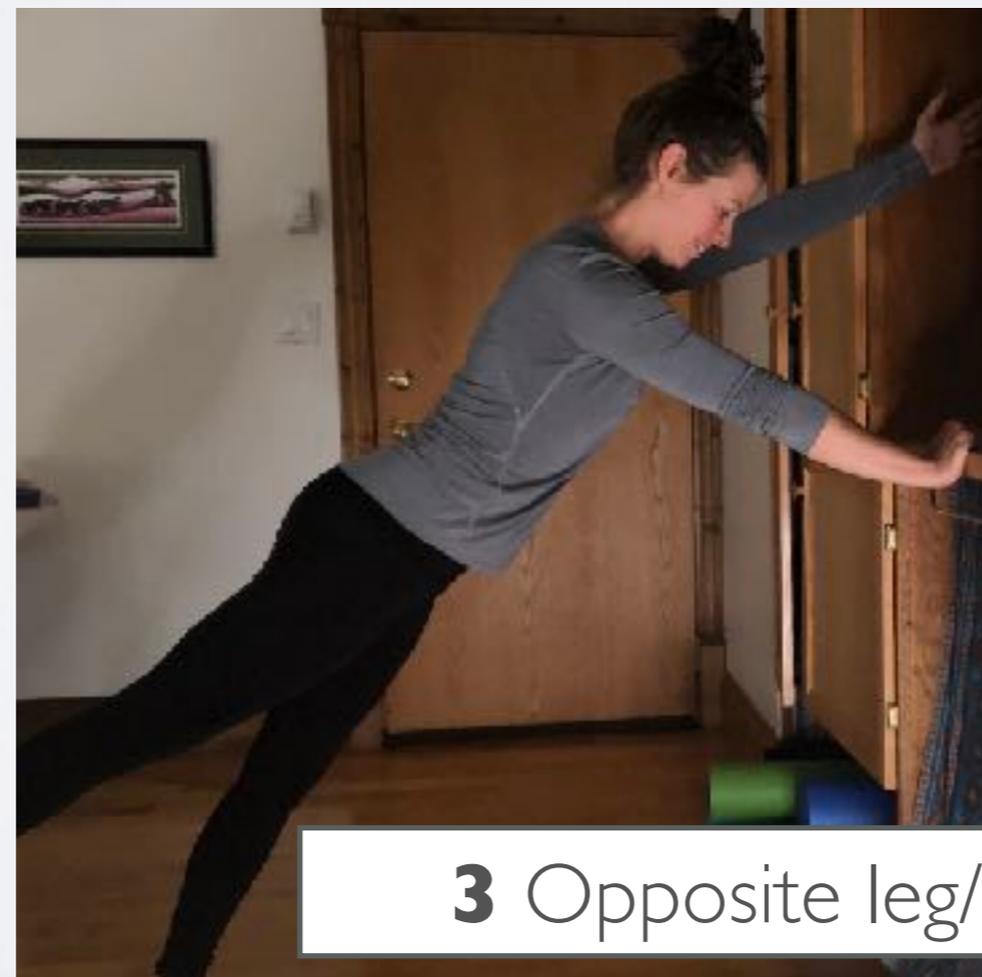
S: Stability (back)



Ideas of progression



A: Abdomen flat
B: Breath
S: Stability (back)



Ideas of progression



Plank on **knees** & hands
(or elbows)

*You can also do these on
exercise bench*



Full plank on hands



Full plank on elbows

A: Abdomen flat
B: Breath
S: Stability (back)