

WE CAN HELP...

Gainesville Physical Therapy provides physical therapy for conditions specific to women. The physical therapists are trained to evaluate and treat women to enhance health and function across their lifespan.

There are many conditions our team of physical therapists can help you resolve:

Dyspareunia - Painful penetration during intercourse may be caused by multiple factors such as: scar adhesions from childbirth or injury, pelvic floor tightness, prolapse, decreased lubrication, vaginismus, and vulvar vestibulitis.

Vaginismus - An involuntary tightening of the vagina to prevent penetration. This "closing up" may be rooted in fear of one's body, sexuality, intimacy, religious taboos or guilt; relationship conflicts; or even life stress. It may be a "protective" response triggered by the body's memory of painful medical treatments; childbirth complications; physical, sexual or verbal abuse; or many other things. The tightness results in pain, which then results in more tightness - and a vicious cycle is set in motion.

Vulvar vestibulitis - Pain or sensitivity caused by any pressure on the vulvar vestibule (the area around the vaginal opening). Intercourse is usually painful, if not impossible. Even sitting, walking or wearing jeans or underwear can be irritating. The pain is often described as burning and/or stabbing and is sometimes accompanied by pain in the clitoris, abdomen, buttocks, or thighs. Musculoskeletal problems, especially in the hip or back, may be the cause of or contribute to the symptoms. Many women with vulvar vestibulitis also have a bladder condition called interstitial cystitis.

Urinary incontinence - At any age, incontinence is not normal. Incontinence is loss of bladder or bowel control resulting in involuntary loss of your urine. Pelvic floor weakness or loss of muscular support for the bladder or uterus may be the cause of these correctable conditions. Our pelvic floor rehabilitation program features several treatment choices including electrical stimulation, biofeedback and exercise. We provide extensive focus on instruction with self-care educational guidelines.

Pregnancy/postnatal Dysfunction - Despite the excitement and joy pregnancy can bring, nearly half of all pregnant women suffer from back pain, abdominal wall changes, and other orthopedic conditions. Although pain and incontinence are common during pregnancy and after delivery, these conditions are not normal. We provide maternity support, manual therapy and strengthening trying to help make your pregnancy/postpartum manageable.

Pelvic floor tension/pain/constipation - Pelvic floor tension or pain in the muscles that support the bladder, uterus, and rectum may be caused by muscle, joint, or nerve problems. Women may have difficulty sitting, or experience pain during intercourse, pain in the hips or lower abdominals or suffer from constipation. Rehabilitation includes pelvic floor relaxation training, manual therapy, and modalities such as ultrasound, electric stimulation, and biofeedback.

Dysmenorrhea - Painful menstruation, often associated with bloating or pain during intercourse, may be relieved by certain postural and therapeutic exercises and with the use of transcutaneous electrical neuromuscular stimulation (TENS). Biofeedback treatment can be used to reduce pain.

HOW WE CAN HELP:

Physical therapy can help resolve the above list of conditions and more. A physical therapist will follow your problem and design an individualized program of care to improve your function and enable you to manage symptoms more effectively. Treatment options could include, but are not limited, to the following:

Pelvic floor biofeedback - This is one of the most effective treatments for pelvic pain and weakness. Kegel exercises require a vaginal contract and release of the vagina muscles. These exercises are the gold standard for improving tone, eliminating spasm, improving blood flow, and decreasing improper sensitivity. Many women who attempt Kegel pelvic floor exercises on their own perform them incorrectly. Pelvic floor biofeedback identifies incorrect movements while guiding you through the exercises using proper body form. Learning the correct movements of performing these exercises at home are vital to your recovery.

Soft tissue techniques - Hands on techniques such as myofascial release and trigger point release can be used to relax contracted tissue, balance muscle, and mobilize joints. Vaginal trigger point release and stretching may also be added to the treatment. When appropriate, postural changes are instructed and stretching and strengthening exercises are prescribed.

Dilation - Dilators (starting with small ones and gradually increasing in size) can be used to gently stretch and desensitize your vagina, which can aid women with dyspareunia and vaginismus.

Education - Our therapy emphasizes teaching self-management techniques. Patient receives guidelines for normal bladder function as well as different techniques and tips to avoid excessive nighttime urination. More guidelines are recommended based on individual needs.