

## HOW CAN PHYSICAL THERAPY HELP ME TO STOP WETTING MY PANTS?

**October is National Physical Therapy Month** and each Sunday in October we will answer the top four most commonly asked questions of us as seasoned manual (hands on) physical therapists. What is the difference between Spinal Stenosis (SS) or Degenerative Disk Disease (DDD) was the first question answered. The second question was how I can have Tennis or Golfer's elbow if I do not play tennis or golf. The third question was what causes the Snapping in my Hip. As we wrap up our celebration of National Physical Therapy month we want to address the most commonly asked question.

**Urinary incontinence is the leakage of urine at inappropriate times.** The leakage occurs because the pelvic floor muscles are not strong enough to stop the flow of urine. For many certain behaviors or habits may contribute toward incontinence.

The pelvic floor muscles consist of a group of muscles that attach to the coccyx (tailbone), and the ilium, (pelvic bone). The muscles form a bowl to support the internal organs and when strong help to prevent or reduce organ prolapse. The pelvic floor muscles allow us sexual appreciation (pain free intercourse and orgasm) and they are the muscles that prevent us from leaking urine or feces. The low back, sacroiliac joint and hips depend upon the pelvic floor for stabilization.

There are 4 types of urinary incontinence.

1. Stress urinary incontinence (SUI) is urinary leakage associated to exertion, activity or movement, laughing, sneezing or coughing.
2. Urge urinary incontinence (UUI) is urinary leakage associated to strong urges to urinate.
3. Mixed urinary Incontinence (MUI) is the term used when you have both stress and urge urinary incontinence.
4. Functional urinary incontinence (FUI) is associated to urinary leakage when you cannot get to the restroom in time due to a physical limitation, dementia, confusion, delirium, environmental barriers or psychological problems such as depression or anger.

Many times fecal incontinence accompanies urinary incontinence. Fecal incontinence is leakage of feces/bowel/BM/poop. In addition, you may also experience an "overactive bladder" where you urinate frequently (urinating more than every 3-4 hours).

Medical conditions, medications, certain foods and beverages, injury, trauma, surgery, pregnancy, childbirth, episiotomy (incision of the pelvic floor muscles during childbirth) or tearing of the pelvic floor muscles during labor and delivery, lack of exercise or use can all contribute toward incontinence.

Incontinence can occur in men, women and children. Though men are particularly intolerable of any form of incontinence, women, athletes and active seniors are seeking resolution to this problem.

All you have to do to get help is call our office at 585-396-1400 and make an appointment. Insurance covers your care.

When you have your **initial evaluation** session a review of your medical history, surgeries, medications and a thorough questionnaire available to you on our website or in our office will be performed in a safe and private setting. Subsequently if you have low back, sacroiliac (SIJ) or hip problems, a physical examination will be performed of the low back, SIJ, pelvis, hips and knees to identify contributing factors to your incontinence. A biofeedback assessment and examination of the pelvic floor muscles will be provided to identify the degree of muscle dysfunction. Your treatment plan will be personalized based on the examination and will include pelvic floor muscle rehabilitation and behavioral modification education.

As always, our focus is on providing a cost effective, evidenced based and conservative approach to your health care. Emphasis is placed on getting your pain, if present and difficult functions under control as you learn self-care and home exercise techniques to reach your goals.

**If you are interested in resolving your urinary or bowel concerns then contact us at (585) 396-1400.** You can also email me at [Zoe@lakecountrypt.com](mailto:Zoe@lakecountrypt.com) .

For more information about Lake Country Physical Therapy and Sportscare, PC, visit us at [www.lakecountrypt.com](http://www.lakecountrypt.com).