

Physical Therapy for Incontinence

By Zoe Fackelman, PT

Unexpected wetting of your pants has got to be on the top of the most embarrassing moments in life. However, there is help for you when you see a physical therapist specifically trained to treat women, men and children with both urinary and fecal incontinence.

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

Women have a tendency to leak urine or feces due to a medical history of pregnancy, labor and delivery or changes in estrogen level. Both men and women may have incontinence due to sexual trauma, surgeries or chronic low back, hip or pelvic region pain.

Men may experience incontinence after prostate removal.

Many do not know where the pelvic floor muscles are located on the body or how the pelvic floor muscles work. Most do not know how to activate these muscles without using the belly or the buttock. The pelvic floor muscles consist of a group of muscles that attach to the coccyx (tailbone), and the ilium, (pelvic bone). The muscles are in the "crotch" area. They 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, when strong, that prevent us from leaking urine or feces. The low back, sacroiliac joint and hips depend upon the pelvic floor for stabilization.

There are four 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 (UII) 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.

For over 16 years at Lake Country Physical Therapy and SportsCare, PC, the rehabilitation program is unique for several reasons. Your care is thorough and personalized in a private setting with the same therapist each session. The program is educational and includes behavioral modification/ instruction about habits, unbeknownst to you, that contribute toward your symptoms. Rehabilitation also includes biofeedback, electrical stimulation if needed and instruction of proper technique of pelvic floor muscle contractions (known as "Kegel" exercise), abdominal and hip muscle exercises. Some may require manual, hands on techniques such as pain reflex release techniques to resolve nerve and muscle tension issues to accomplish pain management to enable dryness. A good program is one that teaches you how to take care of yourself.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Zoe Fackelman is a physical therapist and the owner of Lake Country Physical Therapy and SportsCare, PC in Canandaigua. For more information, visit www.lakecountrypt.com or send her an email at zoe@lakecountrypt.com.



We specialize in hands-on personalized pain management & physical therapy.



Our experts, Robert Christakos, PT, DPT and Zoe Fackelman, PT, can help with a full range of conditions including:

- Head-to-toe orthopedic conditions
- TMJ/TMD disorders
- Sports-specific training & rehabilitation
- Osteoporosis
- Neck & back care
- Post-surgical care
- Incontinence for men & women
- Pregnancy-related pain
- Pelvic floor tension, pain & trauma
- Vertigo, dizziness
- Headaches
- Arthritis & more

Make an appointment and experience a difference. NO REFERRALS NECESSARY | HOME VISITS AVAILABLE



Lake Country Physical Therapy & SportsCare, PC

(585) 396-1400

241 Parrish Street, Suite A | Canandaigua, NY 14424
www.LakeCountryPT.com