



# Women's Health Physiotherapy

“Moving you to your  
best quality of life”



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**We offer treatment for many women's health problems such as incontinence, prolapse, bladder and bowel concerns and sexual pain.**

**Our physiotherapist Libby is a post-graduate trained women's health practitioner and is experienced at treating many different conditions.**

**Treatment sessions are located in a private treatment room, but home visits can be organised on request.**



## Pelvic Floor Dysfunction

There are many causes of dysfunction in the pelvic floor muscles, such as pregnancy, child-birth, gynaecological surgery, chronic coughing, constipation, menopause and obesity. Pelvic floor dysfunction is a condition that in most cases can be easily resolved through rehabilitation of these muscles with specially designed exercises from your Life Ready physiotherapist.

## Urinary Incontinence

Urinary incontinence is the involuntary loss of urine. It affects between 30-45% of all women and incidence increases with age. Stress incontinence is the most common form and occurs during physical exertion associated with coughing, laughing, sneezing, lifting or exercise. Urge incontinence is caused by overactive bladder muscles, a sudden urge to urinate and possible leakage. Physiotherapy can help women regain control through education on correct use of the pelvic floor muscles, bladder retraining and use of electrical stimulation and/or biofeedback.

## Prolapse (bladder, bowel or uterus)

Prolapse is a common condition especially in women who have had children. Symptoms can include 'heaviness' in the vagina and feeling or seeing a lump or bulge in the vagina. In most cases prolapse can be successfully treated and managed by improving the strength and/or function of the pelvic floor muscles under the guidance of your Life Ready physiotherapist. Physiotherapy can also benefit surgical candidates by preparing their bodies for surgery, decreasing recovery time and improving post-surgery outcomes.

## Painful Sexual Intercourse and Vulvodynia/Vaginismus

Some women experience painful sexual intercourse (dyspareunia) and/or spasms in the vulval/vagina area (vulvodynia/vaginismus). Women can have overactive/tight pelvic floor muscles, scar tissue after childbirth and hormonal changes that can contribute to sexual pain. Your Life Ready physiotherapist can carefully assess and treat the factors contributing to your pain and work with you to manage your condition.

## Endometriosis/Painful Periods

Women with painful periods and/or endometriosis can have severe abdominopelvic pain that can interfere with daily activities such as work and school. Your Life Ready physiotherapist can assess your abdomen and pelvic area and provide you with strategies and treatment techniques to help improve your symptoms.



## **Bowel Issues (incontinence or constipation)**

Constipation is a very common problem and is one of the main factors contributing to pelvic floor weakness and prolapse. Bowel incontinence is estimated to affect 5-10% of the population. Your continence and women's health physiotherapist can treat both constipation and bowel incontinence.

## **Prenatal/Postnatal Musculoskeletal Conditions**

The childbearing years are often met with pain and discomfort due to the extra demands on the body. Many women experience low back pain, pelvic girdle pain, leg pain and numbness, severe leg cramps, abdominal muscle separation, coccyx pain and wrist pain. Physiotherapy can prove beneficial for women experiencing these conditions.

## **Abdominal Muscle Separation (Rectus Abdominus Diastasis)**

Rectus abdominus diastasis (RAD) is common during pregnancy. It is caused by the widening of the ligament which joins the two halves of the outer layer of abdominal muscles together as the body makes room for the growing baby. If RAD persists after the birth, it can result in back pain and lower abdominal protrusion. Your women's health physiotherapist can give advice and exercises to help manage and recover from RAD.



## Haemorrhoids Anal Pain

Haemorrhoids are a painful condition which often occur during pregnancy or postnatally. They occur when the veins around the anus get engorged or swollen. Therapeutic ultrasound and LASER therapy by a women's health physiotherapist can be used to successfully treat haemorrhoids anal pain by reducing the swelling of the veins, giving instant relief.

## Blocked Milk Ducts/Mastitis

Therapeutic ultrasound can help to unblock a clogged milk duct very quickly. If the ducts are not unblocked in a timely manner, mastitis can result, along with fevers, rigors and sharp pain in the breast. Mastitis can come on very quickly and is a serious condition, so it is best to seek medical and physiotherapy attention as soon as possible.

## Damaged Nipples

Cracked and grazed nipples can be effectively treated with LASER to aid wound healing. LASER treatment from your Life Ready physiotherapist, together with breast feeding advice from a lactation consultant or midwife can help manage this condition.

## Painful Scar Tissue Post Childbirth

Therapeutic ultrasound and LASER have proven to be effective in reducing perineal pain and aiding wound healing from tears/episiotomy following vaginal birth. Your Life Ready physiotherapist will assess your condition and choose the best treatment for you.

## Osteoporosis

As women age they become more susceptible to developing osteoporosis, or loss of calcium in the bones. A regular weight bearing exercise regime can decrease your bone density loss. This might involve a walking program or even lifting light weights at home. A balance program can also assist in the prevention of falls, a common cause of bone fractures in older women. Your Life Ready physiotherapist can advise you on exercise and lifestyle habits to keep you strong and healthy as you age.

## Personalised Exercise Programs for Postnatal Recovery

Many women wish to return to exercise after the birth of their baby to help regain their physical fitness and shape. It can be a daunting task knowing where to start, and proper advice and exercise prescription can help ensure a safe return to exercise. The physiotherapist will discuss your birth, recovery and exercise goals with you. She will also do an assessment on your pelvic floor muscles and abdomen to ensure that these muscles are recovering well. Appropriate exercises will be given for you to do at home, or in a gym and guidelines will be given to help you safely get back to what you love doing.

## Preparing for Menopause

Women who are perimenopausal can benefit from assessment of their pelvic floor muscles and overall health. The changes in oestrogen production leading to menopause can have negative effects on a women's cardiovascular, bone, bladder and bowel health. A discussion regarding current diet, exercise and life goals can help the physiotherapist and woman create a plan to help the big change occur more smoothly. An exercise program can be prescribed, focusing on improvements in pelvic floor, cardiovascular and bone health.

## Newborn/Infant Care

There are some conditions that your baby could see a physiotherapist for:

- Infant cranial plagiocephaly – a flattened area of the head
- Congenital torticollis – tight neck muscles that can cause baby to look one way
- Positional talipes – baby's feet may look different or bend in one way
- Advice on tummy time and safe ways to carry baby in slings and baby carriers





# Life Ready

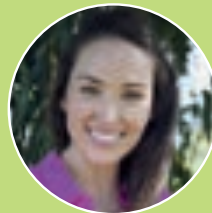
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