

TOO EMBARRASSED TO TALK ABOUT IT... Part 1

Bladder and Bowel Incontinence

What is Incontinence?

It is an accidental loss of urine from the bladder, or wind or stool from the bowel.

How do I know if I have Incontinence?

Do you sometimes leak:

- Before you get to the bathroom?
- When you cough, sneeze or laugh?
- When you change position from lying or sitting to standing?
- When you lift something heavy?
- When you exercise or play sport?

Do you rush to the bathroom?

Do you plan your day around where the nearest bathroom is?

Do you get nervous because you think you might lose control of your bladder or bowel?

Do you sometimes feel you have not emptied your bladder completely?

Do you wake more than two times per night to go to the bathroom?

Do you sometimes struggle to control wind or stool?

Do you sometimes soil your underwear?

Do you strain to empty your bowel?

*If you answered YES to any of these questions
You may have a bladder or bowel control problem.*

What causes Incontinence?

Pregnancy

- The weight of supporting a baby stretches and weakens the pelvic floor muscles and pelvic organ support tissues

Childbirth can stretch and damage the pelvic floor if you had a:

- First Baby
- Large Baby
- Quick labor
- Long labor (particularly the 2nd stage of labor)
- Natural tear
- Episiotomy
- Evacuation method (i.e. vacuum, forceps)
- Three or more caesarian sections

Menopause

- Menopause causes a loss of estrogen, which results in pelvic floor muscles weakness, a less elastic bladder, vaginal dryness and weight gain; all of which affect bladder and bowel control
- Changes that occurred to the pelvic floor muscles and pelvic organ support tissues during pregnancy and childbirth become more apparent with the onset of menopause.

Pelvic Surgeries (ex. hysterectomy)

Regular Heavy Lifting (ex. lifting weights, work duties)

Chronic Cough (ex. smoking, lung conditions)

Obesity

Poor Diet

Chronic Constipation

Neurological conditions

What is the treatment for Incontinence?

You do not have to live with Incontinence.

*Incontinence rarely goes away on its own,
and usually gets worse over time.*

Incontinence is effectively treated with pelvic floor exercises.

*BUT, did you know that pelvic floor exercises are often
performed incorrectly?*

Come to Northern Hills Sport Physiotherapy
to see Joanna Smith (Physical Therapist trained in Pelvic Floor Rehabilitation)
for a pelvic floor assessment,
education on how to strengthen your pelvic floor properly,
and advice on lifestyle changes that will help you get control of your bladder and bowel again.