

## TOO EMBARRASSED TO TALK ABOUT IT... Part 2

### Pelvic Organ Prolapse

#### *What is Pelvic Organ Prolapse?*

When your pelvic organs, (i.e. bladder, uterus, rectum), drop down from their normal position into your vagina

#### *How do I know if I have Pelvic Organ Prolapse?*

It is often difficult to detect pelvic organ prolapse in its early stages, but in its later stages women often report:

- Heavy, dragging or aching feeling in vagina
- Lower abdominal aching or backache
- Bulging in or outside of your vagina
- Sexual concerns (i.e. pain or less feeling)
- Difficulty emptying your bladder or weak urine stream
- Frequent urinary tract infections
- Difficulty emptying your bowel
- Symptoms better in the morning, worsening as the day goes on

#### *What causes Pelvic Organ Prolapse?*

Structures that support the bladder, uterus and rectum in place (i.e. fascia, ligaments and the pelvic floor muscles) are stretched, damaged and/or weakened due to:

- Pregnancy
- Childbirth
- Menopause
- Genetic predisposition
- Overweight
- Regular Heavy Lifting (ex. lifting weights, work duties)
- Chronic Constipation
- Chronic Cough

#### *What is the treatment for Pelvic Organ Prolapse?*

***Do NOT ignore Pelvic Organ Prolapse.***

***Pelvic Organ Prolapse does not go away on its own,  
and usually gets worse over time.***

***Progression of Pelvic Organ Prolapse can be***

*prevented or delayed with lifestyle changes, pessaries and 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 prevent progression of your prolapse.