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Reproductive Needs of  
Children and Adolescents

## Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy

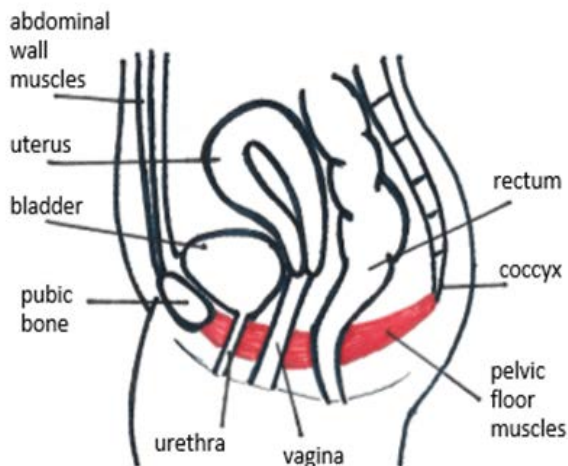
### What is the pelvic floor?

The pelvic floor consists of a group of muscles that are attached to various parts of your pelvic bones. These muscles work together like a hammock to support your pelvic organs (bladder, vagina, uterus, rectum). These muscles tighten and relax in a coordinated fashion to help with some important functions, including bowel and bladder emptying.

Some people may have tight pelvic floor muscles that may cause pelvic or vaginal pain. Others may have uncoordinated muscle action associated with pain and bowel and bladder issues (constipation, frequent urination, etc).

### What conditions can be treated with pelvic floor physical therapy?

- Chronic pelvic pain
- Vaginal/genital pain (including pain with tampon use, sex)
- Rectal pain
- Pain from endometriosis
- Bladder pain
- Frequent urge to urinate or pain with urination
- Leakage of urine or stool
- Chronic constipation
- Vaginal dilatory therapy



### What does pelvic floor physical therapy involve?

A physical therapist who is trained in pelvic floor disorders will first perform an evaluation to determine which muscles are too tight, weakened, or not working in a coordinated manner. Parts of the evaluation and treatment may involve a gloved finger or small probe in the vagina or rectum.

Treatment may include exercises to train the brain and muscles to work together to relax and tighten muscles when appropriate (biofeedback), to strengthen weakened muscles, to stretch and relax tense muscles, and to improve flexibility.

Sessions are typically held on a weekly basis for several weeks. The physical therapist will teach you exercises to do at home. Pelvic floor physical therapy can be uncomfortable for some girls at first, but most see an improvement in their symptoms and less pain over time.