



Supporting Postpartum Pelvic Floor Healing

*LA Best Babies Network - Parent Coach Webinar
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Workshop Objectives

- ✓ Understand the anatomy of the pelvic floor.
- ✓ Understand the relationship between breath, posture, and body mechanics on pelvic floor health.
- ✓ Understand common physiological changes that occur within the pelvic floor during delivery and after giving birth
- ✓ Identify specific strategies to support pelvic floor healing after giving birth



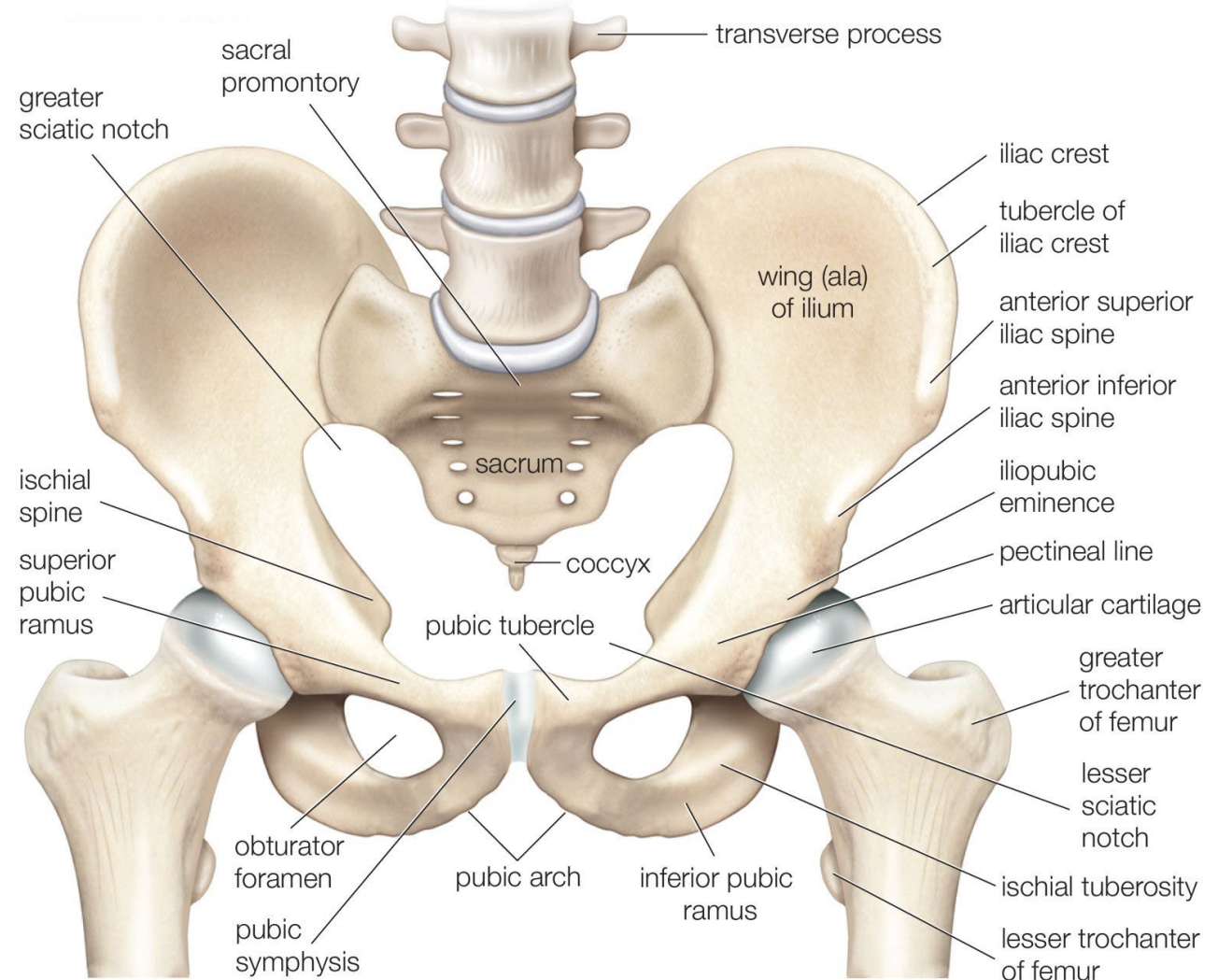
About me...

- Clinical Doctorate in Occupational Therapy (OTD), University of Southern California
- Faculty, University of the Pacific
- Pelvic Floor Therapist, Supported Mama
- Pregnancy and Postpartum Corrective Exercise Specialist (PCES)
- Perinatal Mental Health Certification (PMH-C)

Pelvic Floor 101

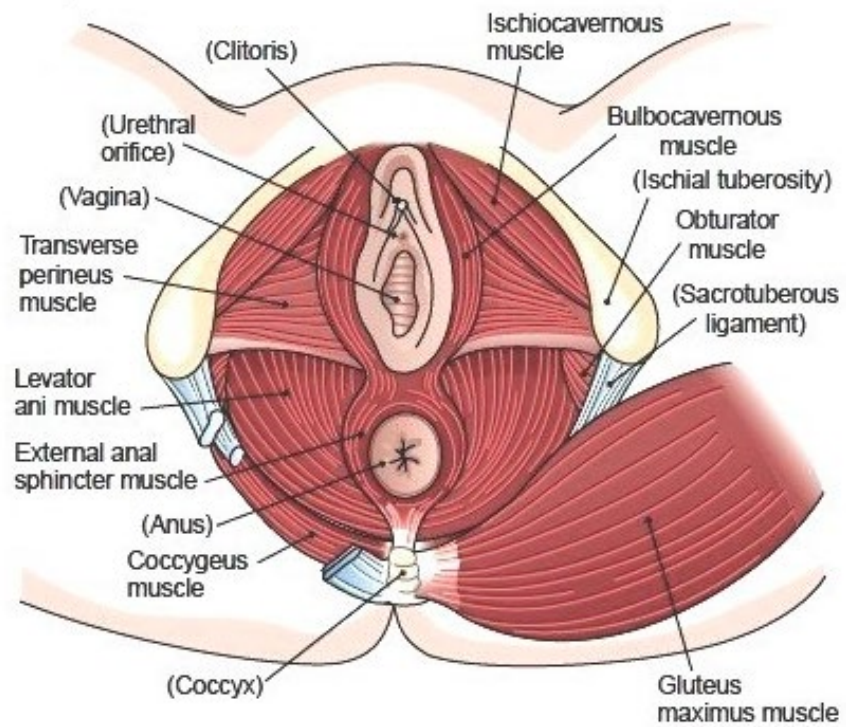
Bony Landmarks

Bones of the pelvic girdle

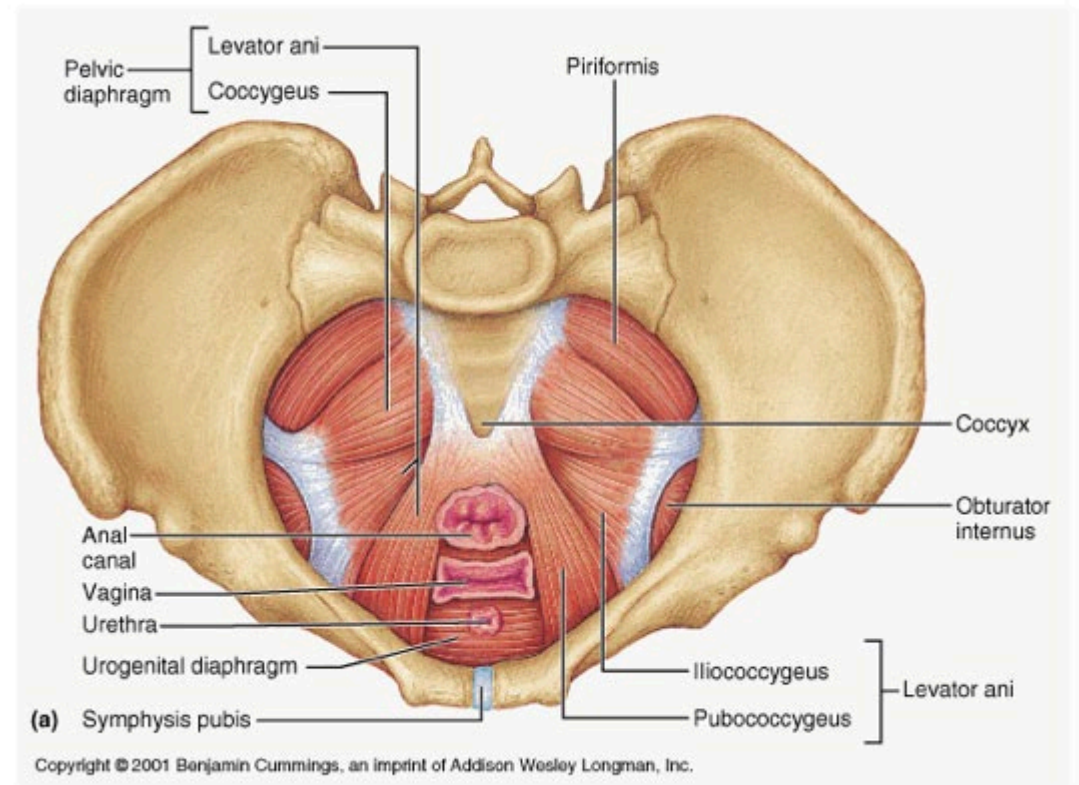


Pelvic Floor 101

Superficial Muscles



Deep Muscles



What are
the
functions
of the
Pelvic
Floor?

Support of internal organs

Sphincteric for toileting

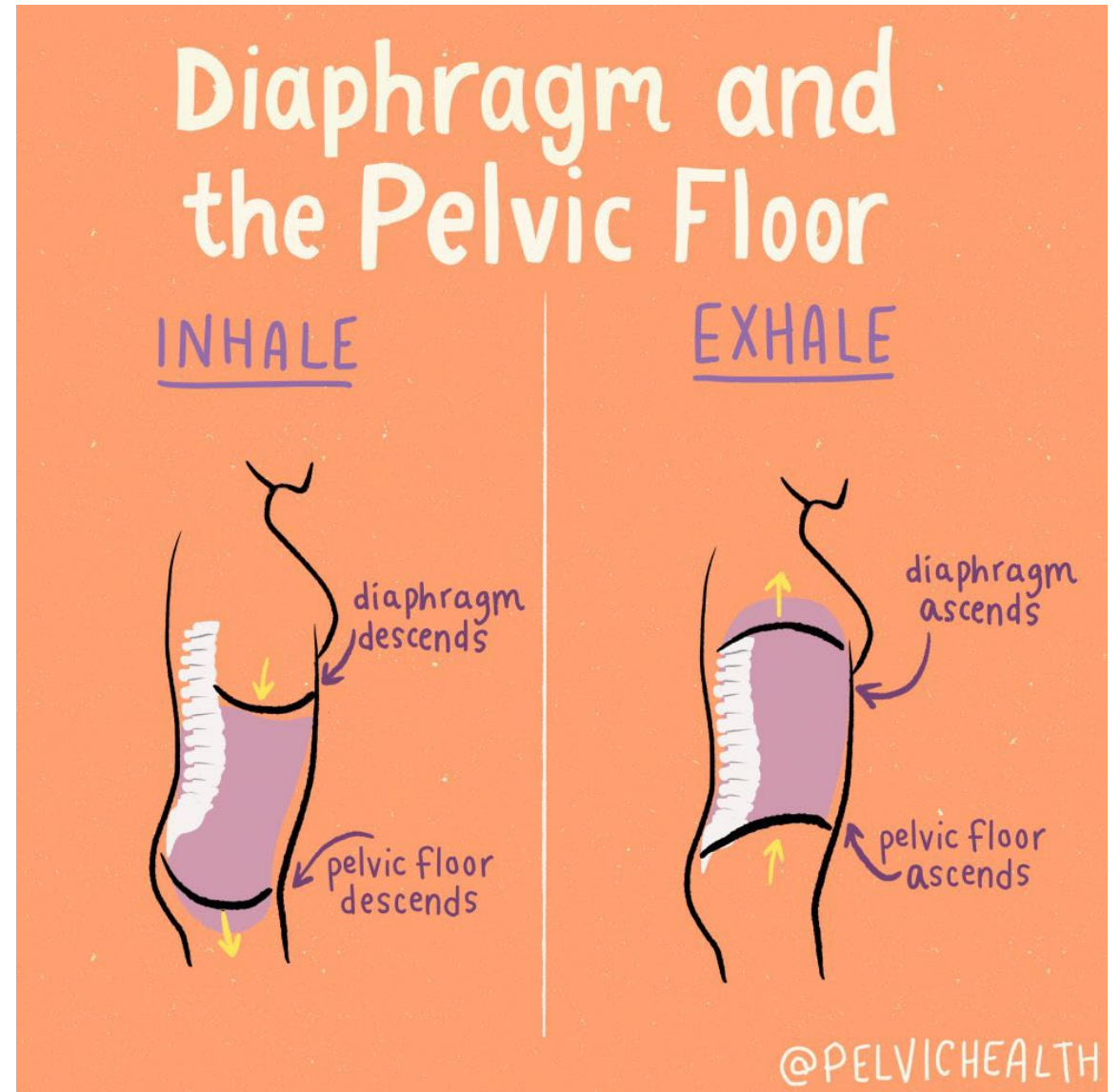
Stability of the core

Sexual

Sump-pump for circulation

Relationship to Breath

Think about the core canister like a soda can or balloon...





Relationship to Posture & Body Mechanics

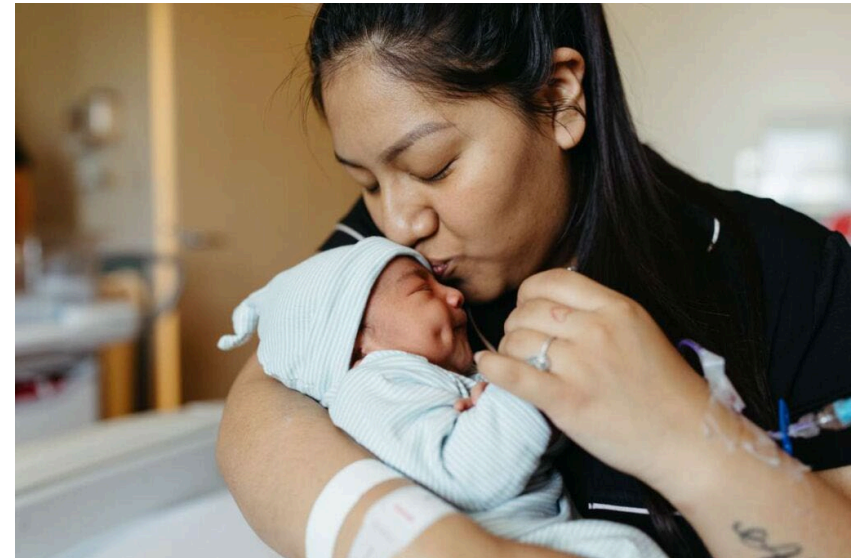


Body Mechanics Considerations

- Repetitive daily tasks of newborn care
- Impact of the environment

Common Physiological Changes

- During delivery
 - Vaginal birth: stretching of pelvic floor muscles of up to 250% of resting length
 - C-section: incision through 7 layers of tissue
 - Note – pelvic floor dysfunction still possible
- After delivery
 - Recovery of muscles and connective tissue takes 4 – 6 months



Common Perinatal Pelvic Floor Conditions

- Perineal tears
 - Grade 1 (least severe) – Grade 4 (most severe)
- Pelvic organ prolapse
 - Experience of heaviness
- Incontinence
 - Leakage (urinary or fecal)
- Hemorrhoids
- Pelvic pain
 - Pubic bone (SPD), sacro-iliac (SI) joint, hip
- Diastasis Recti Abdominis (DRA)
 - “Ab separation”

Strategies to Support Pelvic Floor Healing: Immediate Postpartum Phase



- **Healing & Rest**
 - Padsicles
 - Encourage rest
 - Avoid doing too much too quickly
- **Toileting Support**
 - Nourishment
 - Plenty of water/fiber
 - Position
 - Relax pelvic floor
 - Knees higher than hips
 - Breath
 - A gentle push with the exhale
 - Manage pressure
 - Apply pressure at perineum
 - Pillow against c-section incision

Additional Strategies to Support Pelvic Floor Healing

- 360 Degree Breath
- Gentle upper body stretching
 - Side bends
 - Open chest
- Advocate for referral to a pelvic floor therapist



Perinatal Mental Health Considerations



- Sense of disconnection from body
- Lack of control
- Each day is “new”
- Shifting identity
- Performance expectations
- PMAD’s affects 1 out of 5 within first year of life (Postpartum Support International)

Resources

- **Pelvic Health:**

- @the.vagina.whisperer
- @doclizziedpt
- @mamamadestrong
- @carolinepackarddpt
- @drmelissaoleson

- **Movement:**

- @thebellemethod
- @goodfortheswole

- **Maternal Mental Health:**

- @postpartumsupportinternational
- Maternal Health Hotline
 - 1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262)
- Postpartum Support International
 - free online support services





Questions and Discussion



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Reduce overwhelm
and feel nurtured.

A concierge pelvic health and maternal wellness service
designed to support you as you transition into motherhood.



THANK YOU!



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References

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