



## Pudendal Nerve Pain

Pudendal neuralgia is a chronic condition characterised by pain, burning, numbness or tingling in the pelvic region, perineum, genitals or rectum. It occurs when the pudendal nerve, which supplies sensation to this area, becomes compressed, irritated or damaged. Your SWB Physiotherapist may help manage pudendal nerve pain through;

- Teaching pelvic floor relaxation techniques to help release tension in the pelvic floor muscles, providing feedback to help you learn how to relax the muscles effectively and reduce pressure on the pudendal nerve, alleviating pain.
- Manual therapy techniques such as soft tissue massage, myofascial release and trigger point therapy, can help address muscle tightness that may contribute to pudendal nerve pain.
- Strengthening exercises targeting stability in the pelvic region, potentially reducing symptoms of pudendal nerve pain.
- Education on proper toileting habits, healthy bladder and bowel habits, ergonomic principles for sitting and standing and strategies to increase pain free movement and return to your normal exercise and daily activities.

Your SWB Physiotherapist will empower you with the tools and techniques which aim to effectively reduce symptoms and improve your quality of life.



## Your Pelvic Pain Appointment at SWB

**History and Pelvic Health:** Your SWB Physiotherapist will discuss your individual symptoms, history, pain, menstrual history, sexual function, bladder and bowel function.

**Pelvic Exam:** Your appointment may involve internal examination of the pelvic floor muscles to assess muscle tone, strength and coordination, only with your consent and when you feel ready.

**Education:** Your SWB Physiotherapist will educate you about your pain, the pelvic floor muscles, and other common contributing factors such as stress, anxiety, past experiences, and habitual patterns of muscle tension.

**Pelvic Floor Relaxation Techniques:** Your SWB Physiotherapist may teach relaxation techniques and stretches along with hands-on techniques such as gentle massage, myofascial release and dilator therapy to reduce pain and improve blood flow to the pelvic floor muscles.

Your consultation may also include movement re-education, reviewing your stretching and exercise regime, addressing behavioural factors that contribute to pelvic floor dysfunction (such as bladder and bowel habits) and high levels of stress or anxiety. Your SWB physiotherapist may, with your consent, collaborate with other healthcare providers, such as GPs, gynaecologists, dieticians or psychologists to provide comprehensive care.

SWB treatment plans are always tailored to the individual's specific needs and may involve a combination of therapeutic techniques to achieve the best outcomes.



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Secret Women's Business  
Physiotherapy



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## Physiotherapy for Pelvic Pain

Pelvic pain can be a debilitating condition that affects women of all ages. Our team of experienced physiotherapists at Secret Women's Business (SWB) specialise in addressing pelvic pain and discomfort through personalised treatment tailored to your unique needs. Whether your pelvic pain stems from pelvic floor dysfunction, trauma, musculoskeletal issues, surgery, childbirth, endometriosis or other underlying causes, we're here to provide compassionate care and support on your journey toward recovery.



## The Pelvic Floor, Hip & Back Pain

Pelvic floor dysfunction can occur when the muscles of the pelvic floor are excessively tense or contracted, often resulting in a range of symptoms, including pelvic pain, urinary urgency, bladder leakage and sexual dysfunction. This tension in the pelvic floor muscles can also have a significant impact on hip and lower back pain due to the interconnectedness of the musculoskeletal system in the pelvis and surrounding areas. It is not uncommon that treatment of pelvic floor dysfunction can assist in chronic back or hip pain that has previously not responded to more commonly practiced treatment protocols.



## Endometriosis-Associated Pain



Endometriosis is a common disease where tissue similar to the lining of the womb grows outside the womb in other parts of the body. More than 830,000 (14%) of Australian women live with endometriosis, with the disease often starting in teenage years. Symptoms are variable and this may contribute to the 6.5 years average delay in diagnosis. Common symptoms include pelvic pain that puts life on hold around or during a person's period. It can impact fertility for some but not for all.

Your SWB Physiotherapist can play a valuable role in managing symptoms associated with endometriosis, although it's important to note that physiotherapy is not a cure for the condition itself. Instead, physiotherapy aims to address specific symptoms and improve overall quality of life.

SWB Physiotherapy can complement medical management by providing pain management strategies, pelvic floor relaxation techniques and lifestyle modifications to alleviate symptoms and improve quality of life. Your SWB Physiotherapist will also provide education, validation and empowerment when you are living with endometriosis. They will offer strategies for self-care, stress management and assist with coping with the challenges of living with a chronic condition.

## Healthy Bladder & Bowel Habits

Maintaining healthy bladder and bowel habits is vital for managing pelvic pain:

- Stay hydrated. Both your bladder and your bowels will benefit from a moderate amount of fluid, nicely spaced through the day.
- Ensure you consume a healthy, balanced diet that is high in fibre. Most Australians do not get enough fibre. Your physiotherapist will discuss your bowel habits and work out strategies to assist regular motions. It is essential that as you increase fibre you drink adequate fluids. Some experts suggest you aim for 30 different plant based foods a week – your tummy will thank you for it!
- Avoid straining and ensure you relax during bowel movements. A diet rich in fibre, along with good fluid intake can help regulate and soften bowel movements for ease of emptying. Listen to the urge and avoid delaying bathroom trips.

Your Physiotherapist may discuss other helpful tips like using a foot stool to assist bowel emptying.



## Bladder Pain

Interstitial cystitis (IC) or bladder pain syndrome (BPS) is a chronic condition characterised by bladder pain, urinary frequency and urgency.

Your SWB Physiotherapist can help manage IC/BPS-related pelvic pain through education, bladder training, pelvic floor relaxation techniques, proactive strategies to prevent UTIs, manual therapy and dietary modifications to reduce symptom flare-ups and improve bladder function. These conditions respond well to the guidance of an experienced SWB Physiotherapist.

## Painful Intercourse (Dyspareunia)

Dyspareunia refers to pain experienced during sexual intercourse and can result from various factors, including pelvic floor muscle tension, vaginal dryness, hormonal changes (postnatal, perimenopausal or menopausal) or underlying medical conditions. Discomfort or difficulty with penetration during sexual intercourse, gynaecological examinations or even insertion of tampons can be very distressing.

Your SWB Physiotherapist can help to identify the underlying cause of your pain with penetration. Understanding your pain can be essential for resolution of dyspareunia. Your SWB physio treatment may include addressing pelvic floor muscle pain, offering guidance on sexual intimacy, education on GSM (genitourinary symptoms of menopause), gentle progression of penetration, positioning and skin care/lubricant use to enhance comfort and pleasure during intercourse. A variety of techniques may be used to address muscular pain, at a pace your body is comfortable with.