

Pelvic Floor

ANATOMY

When working the pelvic floor you need to engage and release more than just the urethra muscle. Sometimes we hear the cue "engage the muscle that starts and stops the flow of urine". Along with engaging the urethra muscle, you also need to engage and relax of the center of the pelvis around the vagina and anus. The engagement of the full pelvic floor can take some concentration and practice but it can be helpful to do some breathwork to gently connect with the pelvic floor.

A lot of us who are active and often engaging the core and pelvic floor, can have a hypertonic pelvic floor. That simply means it's overly tight. So concentrating on releasing the pelvic floor is just as important as engaging the muscles.

Having the ability to relax and breathe into the pelvic floor can be beneficial during labor. During the postnatal period you can use these exercises and breathwork to reconnect with your core and pelvic floor.

BREATHWORK

Breathwork is a great way to start connecting to your body and pelvic floor. Make sure you're sitting in a position that allows your spine to be neutral (no tuck in the tailbone). As you inhale allow your lungs to fill up, the diaphragm descends and expands, and your pelvic floor releases downward. As you exhale your lungs will empty, diaphragm and pelvic floor will naturally lift. The natural movement of the pelvic floor can be hard to feel at first so continue to breathe and bring your attention to your pelvis.

ENGAGEMENT

After a few rounds of just breathing and connecting with the pelvic floor, begin to engage and release the muscles. As you inhale you will release the pelvic floor {remember the release is just as important as the engagement}. As you exhale you will draw the pelvic floor muscles up and engage until all the air is out of your lungs. Work through this relaxation and engagement of the pelvic floor a few times.