

## Managing your Pelvic Pain

Pelvic pain is discomfort that occurs in the lowest part of the abdomen. Pain that occurs externally in the genital area (vulva, or labia) is called vulvar pain. Many women have pelvic pain. Pain is considered chronic if it continues to occur for more than 3 to 6 months.

Long-term pain can have a major impact on your daily life. When you're in pain, you may have trouble sleeping, exercising or doing everyday tasks.

Long-term pain also can cause anxiety and stress. And these might make your pain worse.

Pelvic pain can have more than one cause. It can be a symptom of another disease, or it can be a condition itself. Pelvic pain can be a gynecologic symptom that results from a problem affecting the female reproductive system, or it could be caused by problems in the urinary, digestive, or musculoskeletal system.

Treating that problem may get rid of your pain, but sometime tests can't find a cause for chronic pelvic pain. But there are still things you can do to ease your pain and to make yourself feel better. These are some approaches that have been shown to be helpful:

### 1. **Be safe with medicines**

- Read and follow all instructions on the label.
- If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
- If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter medicine.

### 2. **Physiotherapy**

- Physiotherapy can involve learning helpful stretches, relaxation techniques, and massage and procedures that treat pain.

### 3. **Talk therapy**

- Talk therapy with a psychologist or a psychiatrist can help both the body and the mind. It can ease stress and help you learn ways to cope with pain.

### 4. **Sex therapy**

- Sex therapy can be a useful treatment to assist couples in the return to normal, pain-free intercourse.

### 5. **Trigger point Injections**

- Injections of saline, anesthetic, steroids, or opioids, in isolation or in combination with other treatments may decrease pain and functional ability in some patients.
- Trigger point injections can be performed by appropriately trained obstetrician–gynaecologists.

## 6. Relaxation techniques

- Relaxation techniques can help release tension, ease pain, calm emotions and help you to sleep.
- Try relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation and deep breathing
- If you have back pain, lie down and elevate your legs by placing a pillow under your knees. When lying on your side, bring your knees up to your chest
- Put a warm water bottle, a heating pad set on low, or a warm cloth on your belly. Or take a warm bath. Don't go to sleep with a heating pad on your skin.

## 7. Lifestyle Changes

- Practice good posture.
- Lose extra weight, which lowers straining joints and muscles in the pelvis.
- Exercise regularly by doing activity that you enjoy, and pace yourself. Talk to your doctor if working out causes pain.
- Stop smoking: nicotine inflames nerves and triggers pain.

## 8. Keep a pain diary

- Track your symptoms, menstrual cycle, sexual activity, and physical activity. Track stressful events or illnesses. This can help your doctor find the cause or treat it. For examples of a pain diary, click [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

*Always contact your healthcare professional if you have any questions or if your pain changes, and always follow their advice.*