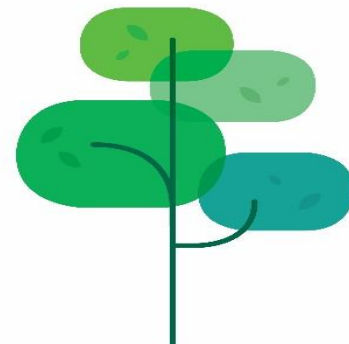


Your bladder and Menopause

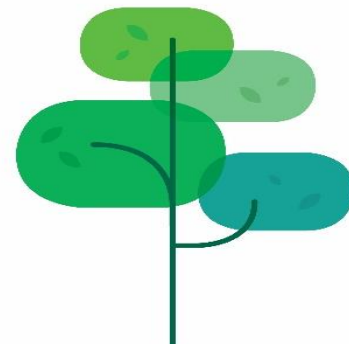
18th November 2022

Morgan Lowe - Pelvic Health
Physiotherapist



Bladder Function...

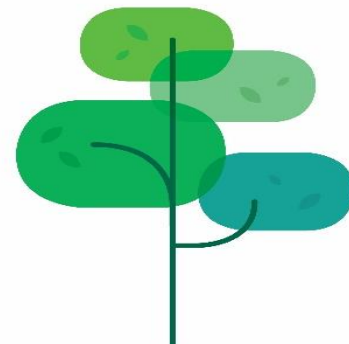
- Between 3 and 6 million people in the UK suffer from some degree of urinary incontinence
- Due to the effects of pregnancy, childbirth and menopause, women are FIVE times more likely to suffer from incontinence than men
- Yet only 1 in 5 women seek help



Bladder Function...

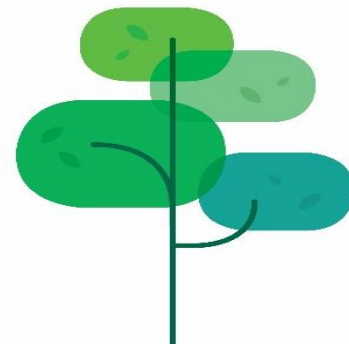
- Although very common, it is not normal
- Shouldn't be considered “inevitable”
- Treatment is often very effective and relatively simple

- Bladder problems are not “the price you pay” for being a woman!!!



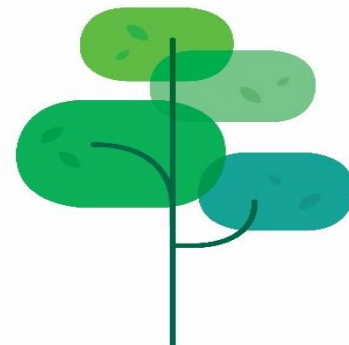
Bladder Function...

- Why do symptoms sometimes begin around menopause?
- Reducing levels of Oestrogen can cause a thinning of the lining of the urethra
- Pelvic muscles can weaken just like the rest of your musculoskeletal system – Pelvic Floor!



Bladder Function..

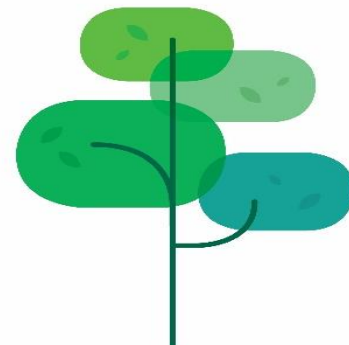
- Two main types of leakage:
 1. Stress Incontinence – Common during perimenopause
 2. Urge Incontinence – Sometimes called “over active bladder”



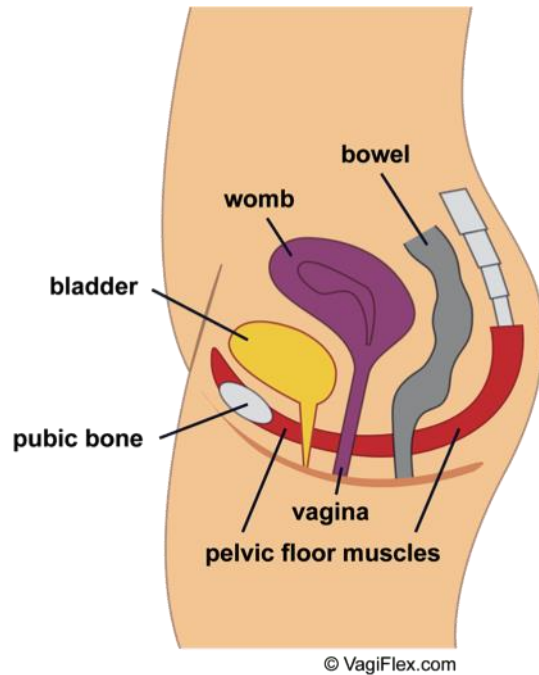
Bladder Function...

Help! Some simple things to try yourself...

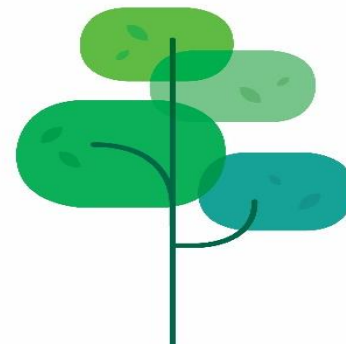
- Reduce caffeine intake (max 3 per day!)
- Ensure you're drinking *enough* (1.5 – 2 litres/day)
- Avoid high impact exercise with SUI until seen POGP – weight bearing exercise doesn't have to mean jumping!
- Avoid “just-in-case” urination
- Most important: Pelvic Floor Exercises!

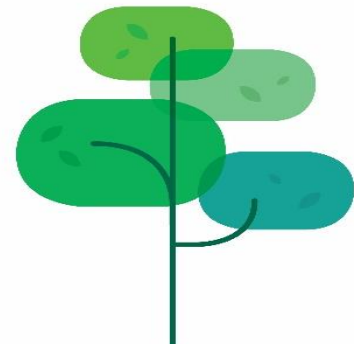
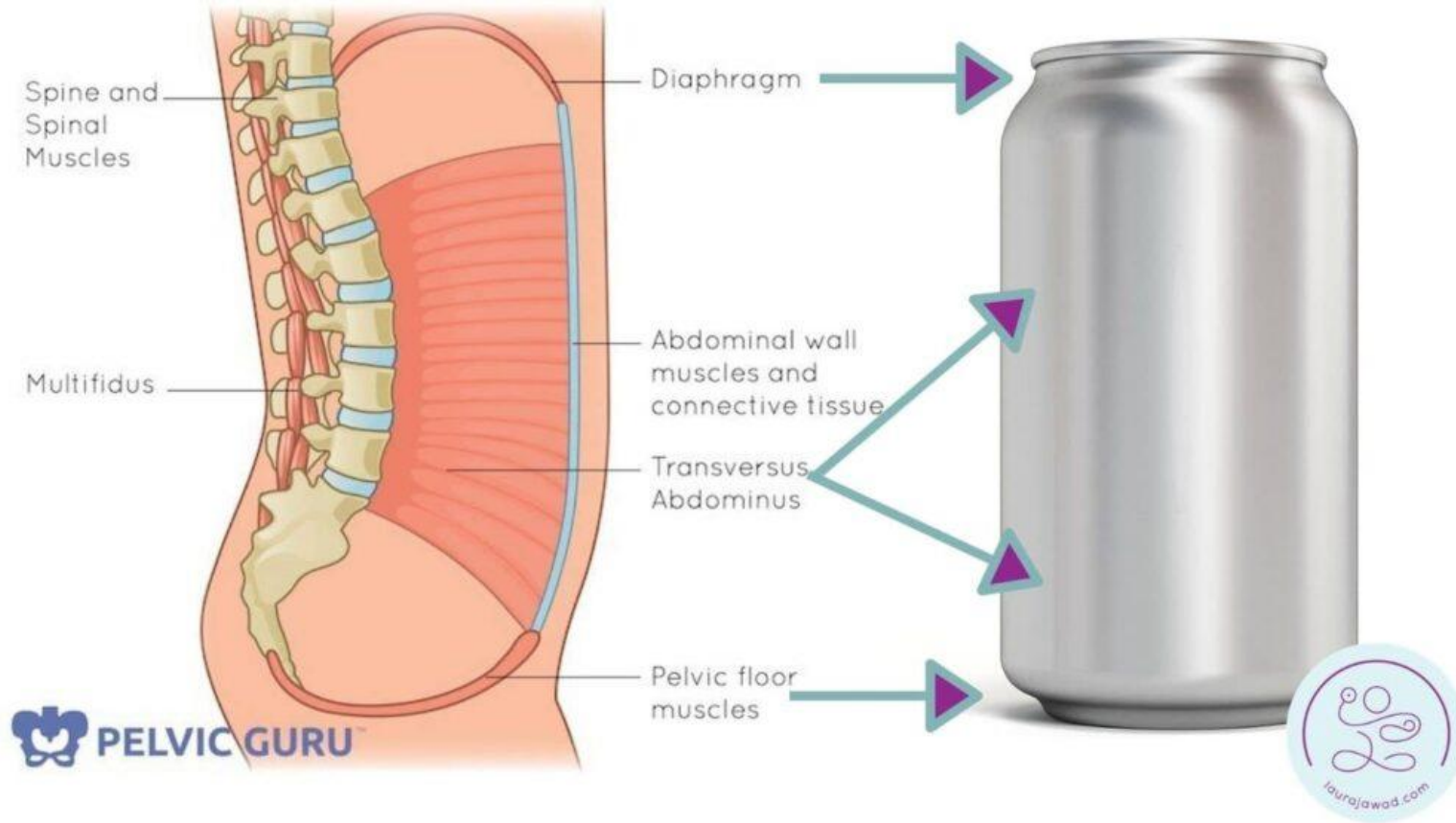


Your Pelvic Floor...



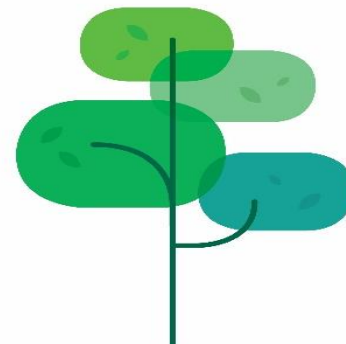
- The pelvic floor muscles are the layer of muscles that support the pelvic organs and span the bottom of the pelvis
- Strong pelvic floor muscles give us better control of our bladder and bowels and support the pelvic organs (prolapse can affect half of all women over 50)





Joint and Muscle Pain

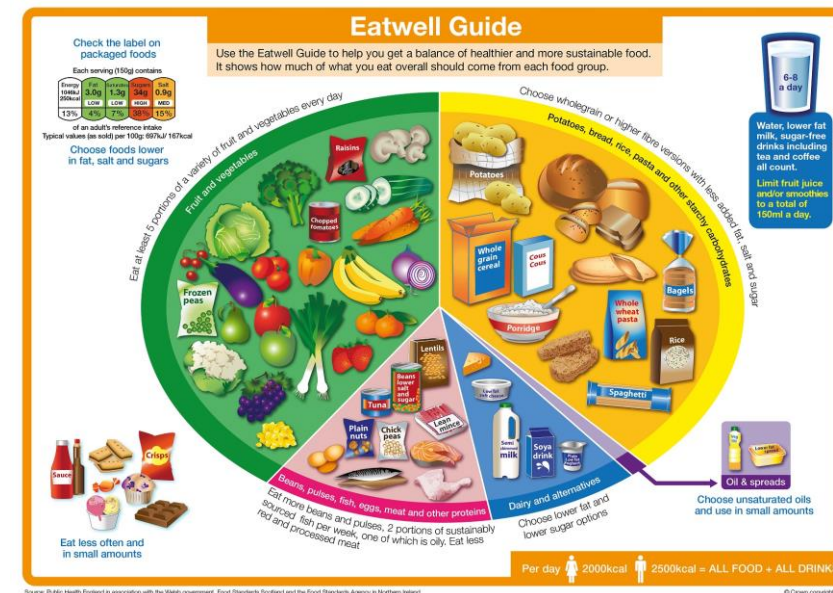
- Not fully understood why MSK pain can be a symptom of menopause
- Thought to be due to changing levels of hormones:
 - Oestrogen falls significantly:
 - helps nourish body tissues and keep them elastic
 - Reduces inflammation levels and stimulates bone growth
 - Testosterone also falls:
 - Supports and increases bone density and helps turn fat into muscle



Joint and Muscle Pain

Lifestyle factors can help manage symptoms:

- Eating a varied, balanced and healthy diet will help support bones muscles, joints and energy levels
- Keep hydrated to ensure good cell hydration and also avoid over active bladder symptoms (no really!) – aim for 1.5-2litres of fluid/day



Joint and Muscle Pain

Physical activity for adults and older adults

Benefits health	Type II Diabetes -40%
Improves sleep	Cardiovascular disease -35%
Maintains healthy weight	Falls, depression etc. -30%
Manages stress	Joint and back pain -25%
Improves quality of life	Cancers (colon and breast) -20%

Some is good, more is better

Make a start today: it's never too late

Every minute counts

Be active

at least **150** minutes moderate intensity per week
increased breathing, able to talk

OR

at least **75** minutes vigorous intensity per week
breathing, feel difficulty talking

or a combination of both

Build strength
to keep muscles, bones and joints strong
on at least **2** days a week

Swim, Run, Stairs, Sport, Gym, Carry heavy bags, Yoga, Bowls, Tai Chi, Dance

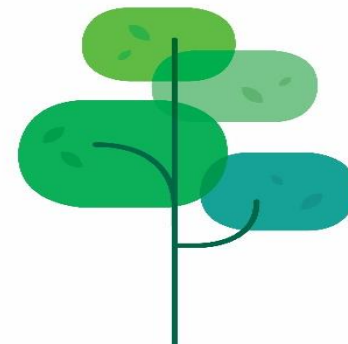
Minimise sedentary time

Break up periods of inactivity

For older adults, to reduce the chance of frailty and falls
Improve balance
2 days a week

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

- Regular weight-bearing exercise – start slowly and build up. The magic cure!



References and helpful links

- Lowe, D.A., Baltgalvis, K.A. and Greising, S.M., 2010. Mechanisms behind estrogens' beneficial effect on muscle strength in females. *Exercise and sport sciences reviews*, 38(2), p.61.
- Maltais, M.L., Desroches, J. and Dionne, I.J., 2009. Changes in muscle mass and strength after menopause. *J Musculoskelet Neuronal Interact*, 9(4), pp.186-97.
- Leblanc, D.R., Schneider, M., Angele, P., Vollmer, G. and Docheva, D., 2017. The effect of estrogen on tendon and ligament metabolism and function. *The Journal of steroid biochemistry and molecular biology*, 172, pp.106-116.
- Women's Health Concern - www.womens-health-concern.org
- PositivePause – www.positivepause.co.uk
- Rock my menopause – www.rockmymenopause.co.uk

