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# Your Pelvic Health and the Menopause


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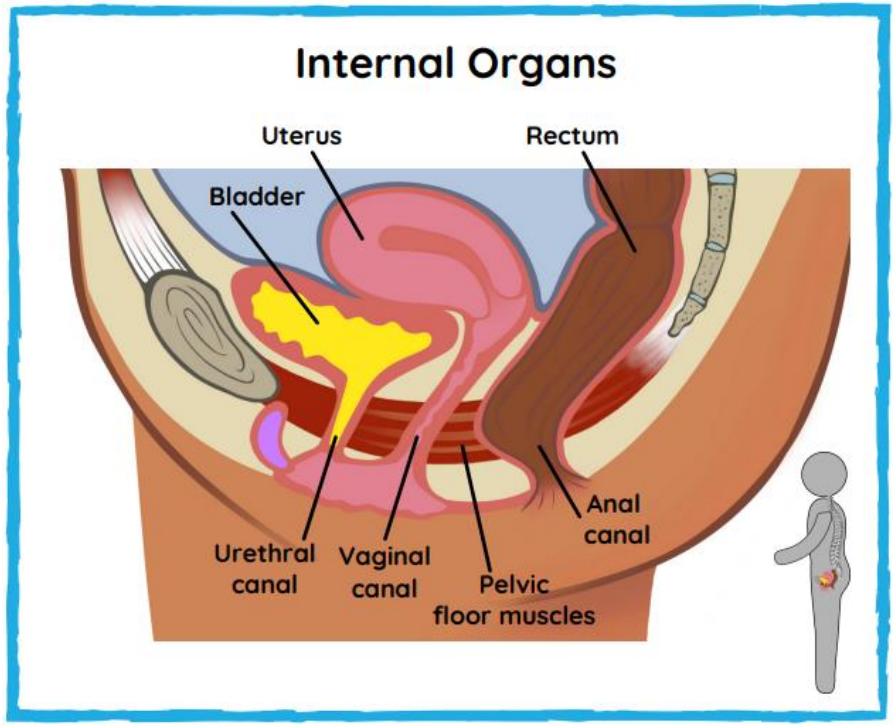
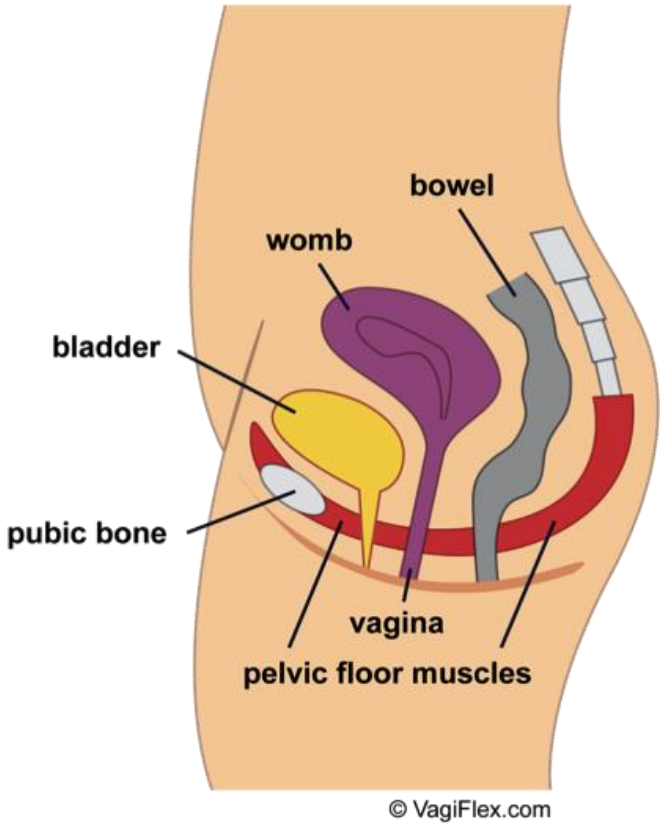
**World Menopause Day – 18th October 2024**

# Pelvic Health Overview



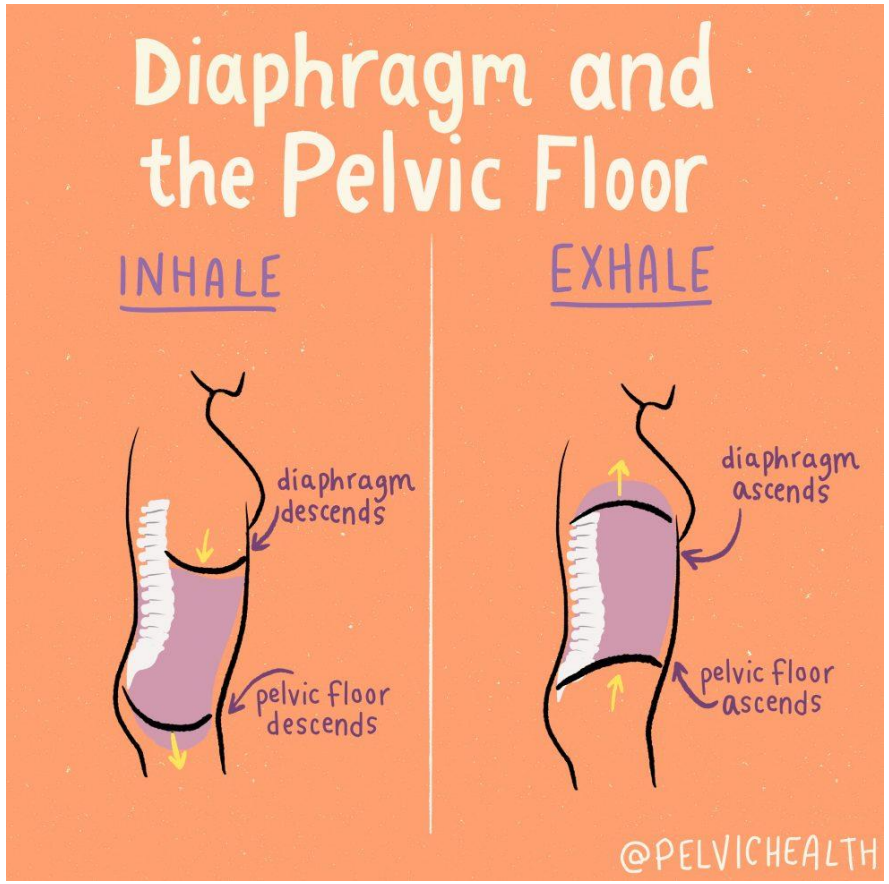

- The Menopause can be a risk factor for worsening pelvic health disorders
- **Genitourinary Syndrome of the Menopause (GSM)**
- As we age the structure and function of our urinary and genital systems changes
- The pelvic organs and their supportive musculature are “Oestrogen responsive”
- Collagen production controlled by Oestrogens

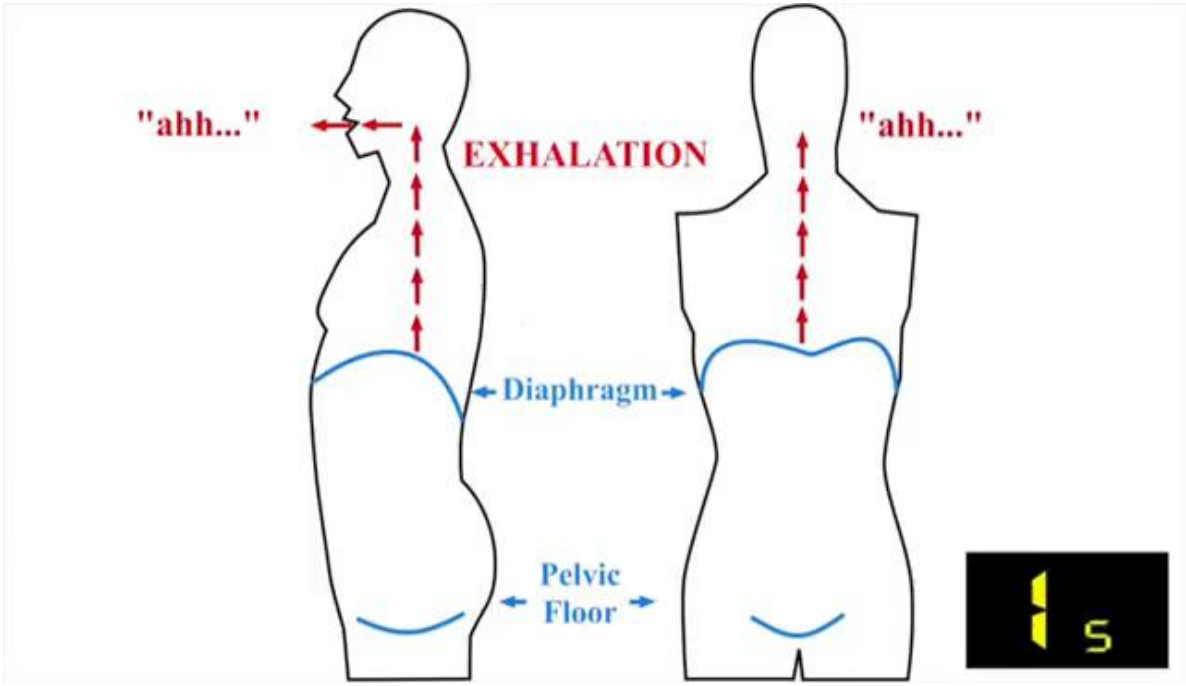
# Pelvic Health Overview - What even is my Pelvic Floor?!!




- 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
- Effects of menopause = thinner, less elastic, less supported

# A bit of Audience Participation!



# 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

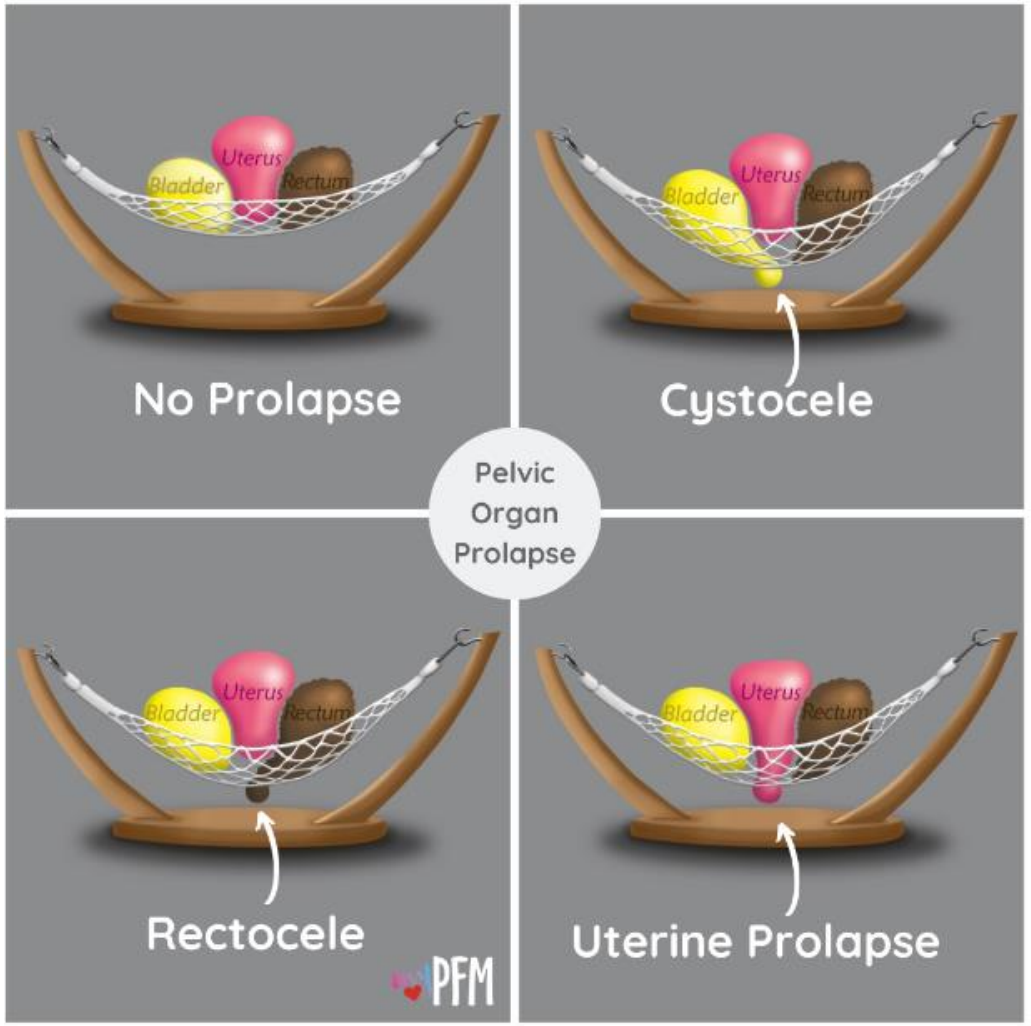
- Bladder problems are not "the price you pay" for being a woman!!!

# Bladder Function…

- Two main types of leakage:

1. **Stress Incontinence** – Common during perimenopause. LOTS of evidence supporting PFM strengthening to reduce
2. **Urge Incontinence** – Sometimes associated with "over active bladder" – topical Oestrogens have been shown to provide some benefit here along with PFM training

# Pelvic Organ Prolapse…



# What can you do?

- The evidence is clear… some simple lifestyle changes and pelvic floor muscle strengthening can prevent or improve the symptoms of Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause

- NICE guidance and a strong evidence base support early referral to a Pelvic Health Physiotherapist or Continence Advisory Service for mild-moderate continence issues/prolapse

# Give these simple tips a go!

- Reduce caffeine intake (max ● per day!)
- Ensure you're drinking *enough* (1.5 – 2 litres/day)
- Avoid high impact exercise with SUI/POP until seen physio – weight bearing exercise doesn't have to mean jumping!
- Avoid "just-in-case" urination
- Try some simple bladder retraining "when did I last go?"
- Avoid constipation
- Most important: Pelvic Floor Exercises!

# Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises…

- Lots of options – electrical stimulation, biofeedback, weights/ cones
- Always start with the basics (free!)
- Remembering is half the battle – Squeezy App
- Start today… Start Simple…

3x per day 5x 5 second hold. 5x “quick flicks”


May your (Decaf!)
coffee,
pelvic floor,
intuition and
self-appreciation
be strong

# References and Helpful Resources

- www.mypfm.com
- www.squeezyapp.com
- Menopause | POGP (thepogp.co.uk)
- www.pelvicpain.org.au

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