

# Pelvic Floor Dialogues

So I pee a little when I laugh. That's normal right?

How has my body changed "down there" since I had my baby?

Everyone talks about Kegels. Do they really work? How much is enough?

3.2018 | ISSUE 26

FOLLOW US:



[www.facebook.com/Voicesforpfd](http://www.facebook.com/Voicesforpfd)



@voicesforpfd

## In this Issue

- Pins and Needles: Acupuncture for PFDs
- POP Goes the Needle
- Chronic Pelvic Pain: Zapping the Abdomen to Relieve Flares
- Incontinence: Stimulating Nerves May Help Stop the Urge
- Around the Web
- The Rest of the Story

### Pins and Needles: Acupuncture for PFDs

Acupuncture prompts images of ancient China and the orient. However, this therapy is widely available in the US. And, some doctors treat a variety of pelvic floor problems with acupuncture. The general theory of acupuncture is that blocked or disrupted body energy leads to illness. By inserting needles at key body points, acupuncturists aim to improve the body's flow of energy. The bamboo shoots once used to stimulate key pressure points of the body in early times are no longer. Today's practitioners use fine needles. While there is still additional research needed, results are very promising for treating chronic pelvic pain. For example, physicians at the Loyola University Health in Chicago treat interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome with acupuncture. If you are considering acupuncture, be sure to talk to your physician. Want to learn more?

- Watch Dr. Larissa Bresler [perform an acupuncture treatment](#) on a woman with chronic pelvic pain.
- Download a fact sheet about [interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome](#).
- Talk with other women about their experiences, join the [Voices for PFD community](#).

### POP Goes the Needle

In a small study, 38 patients underwent acupuncture along with medicine for [rectal prolapse](#). Rectal prolapse is rectal tissue that protrudes from the anal opening. Nearly half of the study participants were women. Acupuncture treatments stimulated the external anal sphincter muscles. Each patient received five, one-to-two-hour treatments. Outcomes were very positive. Nearly all the patients (93 percent) experienced complete remission of the rectal prolapse. And, for the remaining patients, symptoms improved. The researchers noted that most patients experienced improvement after two treatments. That said, this is one small study. Before this treatment goes mainstream, doctors need more extensive research findings.



IMAGE SOURCE: <https://qiblog.emperors.edu>

- Download a fact sheet about [types of POP](#).

[info@augus.org](mailto:info@augus.org)

Accredited © 2018 American Urogynecologic Society

  
Advancing Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery



## Chronic Pelvic Pain: Zapping the Abdomen to Relieve Flares

Acupuncturists believe that imbalances in body regions, called meridians, lead to health problems. They treat (balance) meridians by needling a complementary area of the body. For example, a needle placed in the wrist balances the bladder area. Or, a needle in the forearm, balances the lower abdomen. In the United Kingdom, 30 women are finding out how well acupuncture helps chronic pelvic pain. The participants are all 18 years of age or older and have suffered with chronic pelvic pain for at least six months. The week before the study started, the pain scores for these women ranged from 4 to 10. The study is in process—we'll keep you posted about the results.



- Wonder how other women manage flares? Join the [Voices for PFD community](#).

## Incontinence: Stimulating Nerves May Help Stop the Urge

Many women suffer in silence with [accidental bowel leakage](#) and [urinary incontinence](#). ABL is leakage of stool and gas. And, UI is accidental leakage of urine. Acupuncture holds promise for helping women with both conditions. Patients in a small ABL study (18 adults, 16 women) underwent 10 acupuncture treatments. Before and after the treatment, participants completed a quality of life survey. The findings? After treatment, all patients answered the survey questions more favorably. A larger study (504 women) reported positive outcomes for acupuncture and UI. Half of the women received electroacupuncture. With this type of acupuncture, small electric currents pass through the acupuncture needles. The other half of the participants received a “sham” or fake treatment. After six weeks and 18 treatments, the women in the electroacupuncture group reported less urine leakage. A word of caution: We need many more studies and longer follow up with the patients to confirm the benefits of acupuncture for managing ABL or UI.

- Watch [Dr. Dee Fenner discuss accidental bowel leakage](#).
- Listen to [Dr. Karen Noblett's talk about urinary incontinence](#).



### Around the Web

- What happens during an [acupuncture session](#)?
- [Oprah's first acupuncture](#) session.
- [Acupuncture for overactive bladder](#).
- More on [acupuncture for pelvic pain](#).

## The Rest of the Story

- Arnouk A, De E, Rehfuss A, et al. Physical, complementary, and [alternative medicine in the treatment of pelvic floor disorders](#). Curr Urol Rep. 2017 Jun;18(6):47.
- Befus D, Coeytaux RR, Goldstein KM, et al. [Management of menopause symptoms with acupuncture](#): An umbrella systematic review and meta-Analysis. J Altern Complement Med. 2018 Jan 3. doi: 10.1089/acm.2016.0408.
- Chong OT, Critchley HO, Horne AW, et al. The BMEA study: the impact of meridian balanced method [electroacupuncture on women with chronic pelvic pain](#)-a three-arm randomised controlled pilot study using a mixed-methods approach. BMJ Open. 2015 Nov 17;5(11):e008621.
- Faubion SS, Shuster LT, Bharuchac AE. Recognition and management of nonrelaxing [pelvic floor dysfunction](#). Mayo Clin Proc. 2012 Feb; 87(2): 187–193.
- Emmons SL, Otto L. [Acupuncture for overactive bladder](#): a randomized controlled trial. Obstet Gynecol. 2005 Jul;106(1):138-43.
- Franco JT, Agulhon AM, Viani FC, Viebig RG. Systemic [acupuncture in patients with faecal incontinence](#). Complement Ther Clin Pract. 2016 Aug;24:162-6.
- Gao J1, Li T, Huang Y. Treatment of [prolapse of rectum with acupuncture](#) combined with TCM drugs in 38 cases. J Tradit Chin Med. 2003 Jun;23(2):122.
- Liu Z, Liu Y, Xu H. Effect of [electroacupuncture on urinary leakage](#) among women with stress urinary incontinence: A randomized clinical trial. JAMA. 2017 Jun 27;317(24):2493-2501.
- Oakley SH, Walther-Liu J, Crisp CC, Pauls RN. [Acupuncture in premenopausal women](#) with hypoactive sexual desire disorder: A prospective cohort pilot study. Sex Med. 2016 Sep;4(3):e176-81.
- Paik SH, Han Sr, Kwon OJ, et al. [Acupuncture for the treatment of urinary incontinence](#): A review of randomized controlled trials. Exp Ther Med. 2013 Sep; 6(3): 773–780.