

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?

ISSUE 8

Pelvic Floor Dialogues

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Top Docs Discuss PFDs



The "Break Free from PFDs" events, held in November in celebration of Bladder Health Week, were an incredible success! Attendees left with a better understanding of how to address pelvic health issues with their doctors. To continue to spread the word, we are pleased to provide the following free resources:

- 2014 Break Free Webinar – Watch a recording of the 2014 Bladder Health Week webinar led by Amy Park, MD and Cheryl Iglesia, MD.
- Factsheet – Download an overview of pelvic floor disorders (PFDs), including bladder control problems, bowel control problems, and pelvic organ prolapse.

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- Tips – Download tips on how to start a conversation to help you to Break Free from PFDs!
- PFD Videos – Watch short videos of urogynecologists talking about sexual dysfunction, bowel disorders, and performing Kegel exercises.

POP'ing Up Online

Two researchers, working independently from separate locations, evaluated the quality of the online information about pelvic organ prolapse (POP), the dropping of pelvic organs. Using Google, Yahoo, and Bing, they searched the following terms: bladder prolapse, dropped bladder, uterine prolapse, and dropped uterus. Researchers evaluated the top 30 websites using a standard tool. At the time of their review, the online information about POP was pretty poor and most sites did not provide the information on vaginal pessaries or physical therapy that you'll find on Voices for PFD. You may have noticed that we recently updated our website *completely*. If not, please take a tour of Voices for PFD. We refreshed the content in every section and rolled out a new design.

Getting Your Pelvis Back in Shape

During pregnancy the weight of the baby applies pressure to your pelvis. This can weaken the muscles that support the pelvic floor and lead to PFDs such as urinary incontinence (UI), an involuntary leakage of urine. For women with mild to moderate UI, vaginal weights can help strengthen these muscles. Typically, women keep weights in place for 15 to 30 minute intervals once or twice a day. Inserting a weight into the vagina and keeping it in place while conducting normal activities, forces you to squeeze and work those pelvic floor muscles. Plus, just like exercising other body muscles, as you increase the amount of weight, you can also increase the strength of your pelvic floor muscles. By making these muscles stronger, you can help control UI. We recently learned that a group of researchers are gathering additional information about the use of vaginal weights for UI after pregnancy. We'll keep you posted with regards to what they learn.

Acupuncture for OAB

About 250 women participated in a study evaluating acupuncture as a treatment for overactive bladder (OAB). Also called urge incontinence, OAB is leakage of urine accompanied by a sensation of the need to urinate, or the impending sense that a large leak is going to happen. Study participants received four treatments across a four-week period. Acupuncture proved to be a safe and effective option for treating OAB. So, you may ask, "I've got this bladder that is already leaking, what exactly do they puncture?" Puncture is likely too graphic a word. Acupuncturists use very fine needles. They carefully place the needles at specific points on the body. During OAB treatment, for example, acupuncturists put needles in spots that help to stimulate the kidney's yin and yang (balance) and the kidney's energy (qi). By stimulating these areas, acupuncturists correct imbalances in the body, allowing it to heal.

Menopause and PFD—Bone Fractures, Estrogen Therapies

We've got two stories of note about menopause and PFDs . The first deals with POP and bone density. As we age, our risk of developing POP goes up. Plus, with advancing years, changes in bone metabolism increases our chance of breaking bones and developing osteoporosis. Researchers found that women with severe POP are at a greater risk for breaking bones. However, there was no link

between mild and moderate POP and bone fracture risk. The second study offers hope for menopausal women with OAB . Application of estrogen cream on the outside of the vagina can be effective for managing the sudden “gotta go” of urge incontinence.

No, Not Breech—Breach

In our line of work, we usually talk about “breech” with regards to pregnancy. However, recently we’re discussing a potential “breach” with regards to patient privacy. We’ve learned that an insurance company may have released information concerning future and past GYN surgeries to a third party to help collect payment of debt.

The Rest of the Story

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