



What to Expect at Your First Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy Visit

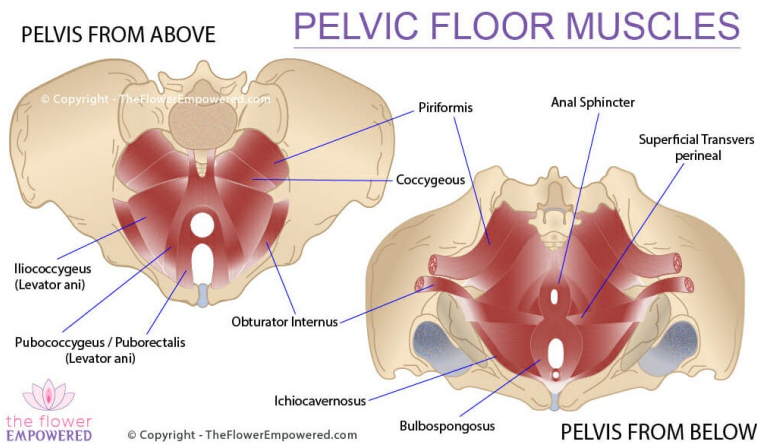
First Evaluation

We get it. You are a bit worried about having a stranger all up in “there” figuring out how your pelvic floor functions. We know how dreadful it is to make that first appointment. But I’m here to tell you what to expect. First off, you can BET your therapist will get to know you a little and explain EVERYTHING that is about to happen before they do anything. We will show you an anatomy model, tell you what we are looking for and why we are doing it. After, if you still feel nervous, we will hold off the internal assessment for another visit.

What to Expect During the Internal Assessment

The therapist will use one gloved finger to feel your pelvic floor muscles and measure how well they work. Usually the pelvic floor muscles are felt vaginally, but occasionally it is necessary to feel and measure the muscles via the anus (especially if the pain is in the anus, rectum, or tailbone, issues with constipation or bowel control).

If you have ANY questions or concerns about the assessment, please share them with your physical therapist, or call ahead of time. We would love to chat with you about it first.



Anatomy

The pelvic floor consists of three layers of muscle in a bowl shape that sits in your pelvic girdle. These muscles support the pelvic organs, assist in bowel and bladder control, and contribute to sexual functions. Pelvic floor dysfunction is the inability to correctly contract (tighten) or relax these muscles. This may be due to over or under use of these muscles causing them to be tight, spastic or weak.

Treatment Sessions

After initial evaluation the therapist will create a program specifically for you. May include:

- **Education** about anatomy, how components work together, how habits and hygiene can affect symptoms.
- **Pelvic Floor Exercises** to contract and relax muscles; and to stretch tight muscles, strengthen weak ones, and improve flexibility.
- **Manual Therapy** such as hands on massage or stretching.
- **Biofeedback** allows you to “see” how your pelvic floor muscles are working using electrodes that display on a monitor.
- **Electrical Stimulation** is a low voltage electrical current to teach muscles how to contract.
- **Vaginal Dilators** are tube shaped plastic devices used to relax muscles allowing easier penetration.