

Do you Kegel?

By Danielle Lecker, DPT

Orthopedic & Spine Therapy of New London

While the postpartum time can be one of joy, love, and excitement, it can also be filled with a little bit of apprehension, sleep deprivation and sometimes discomfort or incontinence.

Your pelvic floor is the “bowl” of muscles at the base of your pelvis that goes through a lot of trauma during labor (even if you attempt labor and then have a C-section). If you injure another muscle in your body, you seek treatment or rehab this muscle through exercise, correct? However many women do not do the same with their pelvic floor simply because they were never instructed in the care of their feminine parts or they believe it is only something they have to worry about later in life.

Even with attempted self-treatment through written or verbal only instruction, statistics identify 50% of women perform Kegel exercises incorrectly on their own.

If you are:

- only squeezing as if to “stop the flow of urine”
- only doing rapid quick contractions
- only doing Kegels “when I think about it”
- holding your breath and bearing down
- doing Kegels on the toilet

you are likely to be unsuccessful with self management of postpartum:

- bladder or bowel leakage
- painful intercourse
- pelvic organ prolapse
- pelvic pain
- low back pain

The above noted symptoms after pregnancy may be *common* but not *normal!* They are definitely not something you have to live with because you are a mom. Instead, seek individualized training for these conditions with physical therapy and enjoy your amazing new bundle of joy without discomfort or constant worry about finding the nearest bathroom.

Danielle Lecker, DPT, is a proud mother and women’s health physical therapist with Orthopedic & Spine Therapy (OST). She has received specialized training in obstetric physical therapy and the treatment of incontinence. Danielle currently treats patients at the Appleton and New London clinics. For more information on physical therapy services during postpartum, please call Danielle at 920.968.0814 or email ostappleton@ostpt.com.