



## Pregnancy & Postnatal



## Perineal Tear & Episiotomy

Is it painful to sit because of a perineal tear or episiotomy?

Are you experiencing bladder or bowel control problems?

Is sex painful or are you worried about resuming sex?

Perineal tears and episiotomy are common with vaginal birth and can contribute to pain, bladder and bowel control problems and sexual difficulties. These problems are distressing and can have a huge impact on every aspect of your life including your ability to care for your baby, your social activities and your intimate life. You might find yourself in pain with simple activities like sitting, feeling embarrassed and avoiding social outings or unable to enjoy sexual intimacy as you previously did. Even if you don't have any of these symptoms now you're at increased risk of developing them as you age.

The pelvic floor muscles play an important part in the management of these symptoms. They are at the base of your pelvis, attaching from the pubic bone at the front to the tail bone at the back. These muscles support and control the bladder and bowel and play a role in sexual function. A normal pelvic floor can contract and relax. Following pregnancy and a perineal tear or episiotomy your pelvic floor may be weak or too tight. Constipation, chronic cough, strenuous sports, menopause, obesity and ageing can also affect the pelvic floor.

85% of women have some degree of perineal trauma with vaginal birth and 17% have an episiotomy. These women often experience pain, bladder and bowel control problems and sexual difficulties. Evidence shows that you can successfully treat these problems through a personalised pelvic health program designed and managed by a specifically trained Physiotherapist.



## What Will My Physiotherapy Program Involve?

- A thorough assessment to establish your goals, pelvic floor requirements and treatment plan
- Design of a personalised pelvic floor muscle exercise program
- Progression of your program and application to daily activities
- Management of any soft tissue damage and scar tissue
- Touch desensitisation and / or manual therapy techniques to relieve the perineal pain

## How Often Will I Need To Attend?

The number of treatments varies for each individual. To achieve optimal gains, most women require 4 to 6 visits over a 4 to 6 month period. You can expect to experience gradual improvement in your symptoms throughout this time.

Motivation and adherence are important factors in achieving your goals. Your Physiotherapist will regularly re-assess these goals and work with you to ensure the program is achievable and appropriate for your lifestyle.

## What Can WMHP Do For Me?

Many women experience a perineal tear or episiotomy in labour but pain and bladder and bowel problems after are not normal. You don't have to live with it or suffer in silence. In most cases these problems can be cured or better managed. At Women's & Men's Health Physiotherapy we lead the way in pelvic health. We'll assist you with a comfortable recovery so you can enjoy this special time with your baby and return to your normal level of activity and intimacy with confidence.

## Why Choose Women's & Men's Health Physiotherapy?

 We're a group of female Physiotherapists who specialise exclusively in the area of continence management and pelvic floor muscle rehabilitation

 We'll design a personalised pelvic health program for you

 We're passionate about empowering women to regain their confidence and change their lives for the better

 Our Physiotherapists and administrative team recognise the sensitivity of your symptoms and will treat you with understanding, respect and discretion



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