

Antenatal Pelvic Floor Group

Top Tips and Advice

Bladder Tips:

- Ensure good fluid intake: drink 1.5-2L per day
 - Avoid caffeine (coffee, energy drinks, tea, fizzy drinks, hot chocolate)
 - Avoid other bladder irritants (blackcurrant, citrus, alcohol etc)
- Avoid going to the toilet 'just in case'
- If you feel you don't fully empty your bladder, try leaning forwards to help empty.
- If your bladder is waking you up more than once at night – have your last big drink 2 hours before bed.
- Think about pelvic floor exercises, have you been doing them 3 times a day?
- If you leak urine when coughing/sneezing/exercising, try to squeeze the pelvic floor muscles before coughing, sneezing and lifting.

Dealing with bladder urgency:

This is useful if you struggle with bladder urgency or leak on the way to the toilet.

When the urge is present, try to wait and be calm for the urge to pass before going to the toilet.

To help calm the urge, you can try the following:

- Pressure on perineum (area between the vagina and anus)
- Squeeze pelvic floor
- Distract your brain by doing something else
- Point your toes or pinch the tendon at the back of your ankle

Bowel Advice:

When opening your bowels, rest your feet on a footstool and elbows on knees.

If constipated, consider the following:

- Am I drinking enough fluid? (1.5-2L a day)
- Gentle exercise keeps the bowels moving
- Do I have enough fibre in my diet?
 - Wholemeal, wholegrain, seeds and nuts, fruit and vegetables
- Medications can be taken to ease constipation
 - Ask your GP, health visitor or local pharmacist for advice about laxatives



Healthy Exercise:

- Mild to moderate exercise is good for both you and your baby (brisk walking and swimming)
- If you are used to exercising you can continue with your normal routine if you feel well and your midwife is happy for you to do so
- If you are new to exercise - begin with 15 minutes continuous activity, 3 times a week, gradually increasing to 30 minutes at least 4 times a week
- Avoid dehydration and getting out of breath (you should always be able to talk in full sentences)
- Contact sports and fast rapid twists and turns should be avoided
- Stop or modify any activity that produces pain

Pelvic Floor Exercises:

To squeeze the pelvic floor muscles, tighten around the back passage (as if stopping wind) and squeeze tight around the front passage (as if stopping a wee). It should feel like a tighten and lift in the vagina.

When you do your exercises:

- Squeeze and hold for up to 10 seconds and repeat up to 10 times
- Squeeze briefly and relax and repeat this 10 times
- Do the fast and slow exercises 3 times a day
- Avoid holding your breath or squeezing your legs or bottom cheeks together as this is cheating!

Pelvic floor exercises are very important to do regularly during pregnancy to support bump, prepare for delivery and prepare for rehabilitation after baby is born.

Perineal care and preparation:

To help reduce risk of a severe tear:

- Perineal massage from 35 weeks – discuss with midwife before starting
 - Sit in a warm bath or on a warm compress to relax the tissues before starting
 - Trim nails and clean hands
 - Get comfy either laying down or reclined
 - Use lubricants such as coconut oil, olive oil, vitamin E oil or personal lubricant.
 - Insert one or both thumbs a few centimetres into the vagina
 - Gently press down towards the back passage and slowly sweep to the sides of the vaginal walls
 - Hold for 30-60s and release
 - Complete for approx. 5mins
- Warm compress on perineum during pushing phase of labour – discuss this with your midwife
- Choose labour/ birthing positions comfortable for you but some recommended positions are shown below:



CHFT Physiotherapy outpatient department contacts:

<https://www.cht.nhs.uk/services/clinical-services/physiotherapy-outpatients/>

Or google 'CHFT outpatient physiotherapy'

Or scan this QR code:

PPHS Website:

GetUBetter app:



If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Women's Health Physiotherapy

Telephone: 01484 712515

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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