

**PELVIC
PT PRO**

Physical Therapy
Policies and Procedures Manual

The Female Pelvic Floor



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Policy and Procedures Manual Female Pelvic Floor Last Update 12/2022

220 pages, 111 References/footnotes. Photos/Illustrations

General Information

- Overview of Guidelines, a definition
- Documentation of Competency
- Scope of Practice in Pelvic Health
- Risk Management summary
- Rules for Chaperone in Pelvic Health practice
- Informed Consent
- Risks, Benefits, Alternatives
- Provisions for Patient Privacy
- Infection Control Procedures; Document for Evidence of Compliance
- Compliance with PT/OT Practice Rules
- Common Indications for Intravaginal/rectal Muscle Assessment
- Relative Precautions for Intravaginal Muscle Assessment
- Absolute Contraindications for Intravaginal/rectal Muscle Assessment
- Regulations Compliance based on APTA Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics

Informed Consent (Samples)

- Patient Information/Education Sheet: Risks, Benefits, Alternatives
- Specific Patient Consent for Treatment of Pelvic Floor Muscles
- Sample Conversation with a patient new to Pelvic Floor Therapy
- Sample illustrations for patient education

Assessment of Patients

- Policy for Assessment/Reassessment of Patients
 - Desirable outcomes
 - Orientation to Clinic
 - Initial Visit with therapist (allay fears, patient identifiers, subjective report, objective examination, Establish Plan of Care, Documentation)
- Assessment of Pelvic Floor Muscle Dysfunctions
 - Indications for PFM exam
 - Precautions. Relative and Absolute Contraindications
 - Desirable Outcomes
 - Suggested Algorithm for treatment
- Self Reported History (subjective)
 - Questions to facilitate conversation regarding present complaint, medical, obstetric, sexual bowel, medical history, medications and diagnostic tests
- Clinical Screening (Objective)
 - General Observation: posture, gait, movement patterns, respiratory patterns
 - Pelvic Girdle: asymmetry, pain
 - Large muscles groups attaching to pelvic girdle: assess for length, strength, tension, TrP's
 - Breath
 - Soft Tissue Assessment; scars, TrP's, mobility, tension
- Plan of Care: fleshing out and defining clinical and functional goals

Assessment of Pelvic Floor Muscle Dysfunction

Procedure for Perineal & Intravaginal Assessment

- Indications for Intravaginal/Intraanal Pelvic floor muscle (PFM) assessment
- Precautions/relative contraindications
- Absolute contraindications
- Desirable outcomes
- Determine what to treat first and subsequently

Suggested Items to Include in Patient Assessment

- Present Illness
- For Patients with Pelvic Floor Muscle Weakness
 - For patients with urinary leakage
 - For patients with pelvic organ prolapse
- Relevant Medical History
 - Obstetrical History
 - Gynecological History
 - Sexual History
 - GI/Bowel History
 - Habits/Physical/Anthropological
 - Other relevant medical history
- Medications
- Relevant Medical Tests

Clinical Observation (Objective)

- General Observations/Screening
- Pelvic Girdle Screening
- Large Muscles of the Pelvic Girdle
- Breath
- Soft Tissue Assessment
- Abdomen

Data to be included in a Plan of Care

Assessment of the Perineum & Pelvic Floor Muscles: External & Intraavaginal

- Function of the Pelvic Floor Muscles
- Data to Collect from Assessment
- Equipment Needed
- Patient Education/Consents

External Assessment of the Perineum

- For Patient who declines to remove her pants and/or underwear
- Patient Position for Assessment
- Therapists Position for Assessment
- External Assessment
 - Skin Condition
 - Labia Majora
 - Clitoris
 - Urethra
 - Vaginal Orifice
 - Ischial tuberosities

- Anal Area
 - Observe voluntary contraction/relaxation of the PFM, quality and accuracy
 - Facilitate awareness/contraction of PFM
 - Facilitate relaxation/resting of the PFM's
 - Observe function of muscles with cough
 - Ask for lengthening contraction of the muscle
 - Perineal Reflexes
 - Anocutaneous Reflex/Anal Wink
 - Osinski Reflex/Bulbocavernosus Reflex
 - Cotton Swab or Q tip test
- External Perineal Palpation and Observation
- Intravaginal Assessment of the Pelvic Floor Muscles and Soft Tissue
 - Intravaginal Assessment of Superficial PFM/Layer 1
 - Procedure for Entering the Vaginal Canal
 - Assesment for Pelvic Organ Prolapse
 - Sensory Testing
 - Intravaginal Assessment of Perineal Membrane/Layer 2
 - Test for Urethral Mobility
 - Intravaginal Assessment of Deep Pelvic Floor Muscles/Layer 3
 - Examination of Muscle function by internal palpation
- Nonverbal Communication: Entering Patient's Personal Space
- Summary of Treatment Options for Pelvic Floor Dysfunctions

Assessment of the Anal Triangle

- Data to be gathered
- Equipment needed
- External Assessment/Observation (Photo)
 - Positioning (Photo)
 - Sensory Testing (Photo)
 - Alternate Positions for Intraanal assessment (Photo)
- Intraanal Assessment
 - Entering the canal
 - Assessment of External Anal Sphincter
 - Assessment of the deeper pelvic diaphragm; puborectalis, piriformis, coccygeus
 - Exiting the canal
 - Special Considerations

Assessment of Pelvic Floor Muscles Using Surface EMG biofeedback

- Considerations
- Sensor Choices
- Developing a Data Driven Plan of Care
 - Sensor choices; Single vs. Dual Channel
 - Equipment needed
- Procedure
 - Initial Interview
 - Patient Education
 - Assessment of baseline, tonic, phasic muscle activity
- Interpretaton of Tracings
- Special Considerations
 - Choice of external electrodes, electrode placement, decreasing skin impedance

Creating Plans of Care

- Data driven Plan of Care
- Choose Diagnosis Specific Interventions
- Suggested Elements in a Plan of Care
 - Evaluation, Patient Education, Address Patient Concern

Treatment Interventions

Retraining Pelvic Floor Muscles

Uptraining

For Weak Muscles

- Patient Positioning
- Instrument Assisted Facilitation
 - Balloon catheter, Tampons, Sexercises
- Manual Facilitation
 - Quick stretch, Therapy Ball
 - Overflow from adjacent muscles; adductors, glutes, obturator, PNF patterns
- Modalities
 - Electrical Stimulation and Biofeedback

For Fair/Good Muscles

- Progression of all above listed interventions
- Functional Training
 - With Vaginal weights during lifting, cough, sneeze, work related activities
 - Functional ADLs; The Knack, Transitional movements
- Therapeutic Exercise
- Modalities
- Home Exercise

Downtraining/Therapeutic Interventions

- Self Stretching Exercise for Large Muscles of the Pelvic Girdle (Photos with text)
 - Adductors, Hamstrings, Quadratus, Progressive squatting, Pelvic Floor Releases
- Gentle/Calming External Manual Therapy Techniques (Photos with text)
 - Skin Rolling, Pelvic Diaphragm Release, Myofascial stretches, Strain/counterstrain
- Manual Therapy Interventions
 - Trigger Point Release, Intravaginal/intraanal, large muscles
 - Strumming, Connective Tissue Massage, Visceral fascial release, cupping, perineal massage, traditional massage
- Modalities Listed
- Correct Muscle Imbalances/Alignment
- Therapeutic Exercises (Photos with text)
 - Stretching and Strengthening
- Facilitate changes in Lifestyle
 - Mindfulness, sleep hygiene, Nutritional guidance, Ergonomics
- Provide Resources
 - Vendors, Counseling, other

Procedure for Application of Biofeedback for Uptraining and Downtraining

- Options for Biofeedback without Equipment
- Desired Clinical Outcomes
- Equipment

- Procedure
 - Initial Interview, Set Up, Preparing Patient, Apply Biofeedback, Patient Education, Progression, Manual Cueing, Observe baseline
- Uptraining
 - Biofeedback assisted strengthening, integrating into functional movements/ADL's
- Downtraining
 - Observe baseline, facilitate relaxation
 - Functional Downtraining
 - For Vaginal Penetration (photo)
 - For Relaxation on Toilet
- Complete the Treatment

Procedure for Application of Cryotherapy/Cold

- Precautions
- Patient Assessment
- Desired Clinical Outcomes
- Application of Cold in a Clinical setting
 - Gel Col Pac®, Ice in Ziploc Bag, Ice Popsicles
- Application of Cold at home; External and Intravaginal
 - Ice in Ziploc bag, gel pack, frozen water in rubber glove, homemade popsicle

Procedure for Application of Heat

- Precautions
- Patient Assessment
- Desired Clinical Outcomes
- Application of Heat in a Clinical setting
 - Hydrocollator® or Hydratherm®
- Application of Heat at home
 - Commercially available heat packs, reusable gel pack, hot water bottle

Procedure for Application of Therapeutic Ultrasound for Pelvic Floor & Pelvic Girdle

- Evidence for Efficacy
- Guidelines for Application of Ultrasound
 - Depth of desired penetration, parameters for application, thermal/ non-thermal effects
- Conductive Mediums
 - Condoms with water and gel (retired procedures) Next® Coupling Medium, Sono Wipes®, Gel Pads for ultrasound application
- Suggested Parameters for Pelvic Floor/pelvic girdle Dysfunctions
 - Acute trauma, coccygodynia, pubic symphysis, levator ani syndrome, piriformis/deep muscles, softening scars
- Ultrasound Dosage Calculation

Procedure for Application of Electro Therapies for Pelvic Floor and Pelvic Girdle

- Interferential: physiological impact, clinical application, indications, contraindications
- TENS: physiological impact, clinical application, indications, contraindications
 - Traditional TENS, Acupuncture TENS, Brief Intense TENS, Burst mode TENS
- High Volt Pulsed Current (HVPC): Waveforms, parameters

- Other: Neuromuscular Electrical Stimulation (NMES) and Hand held units
- Evidence for Practice for Incontinence and Overactive Bladder
- Desired Clinical Outcomes
- Contraindications and Precautions
- Diagnosis Specific Methods of Application
 - Weak muscles, Overactive Bladder, Pain
- Detailed Procedure for Application of Intravaginal, Intraanal Stimulation

Procedure for Massage: Perineal, Thiele's Episiotomy Scar, Abdominal Scars

- Contraindications for Intravaginal Massage
- Patient Education
- Perineal Massage, Episiotomy Scar Massage, Thiele's Massage, Piriformis Massage
- Abdominal Massage: Evidence for Practice. Early Stage, Progressive (illustration)
- Instrument Assisted Myofascial Interventions: cupping, Lyapko (Photos)

Procedures for Instrument Assisted Pelvic Floor Interventions:

Dilators/Vibrators Intravaginal, Intraanal, Ohnut®

- Descriptions of Instruments: Cool Water Cones, Dilators and Vibrators (pictures)
- Desired Outcomes, Contraindications
- Procedure for using Dilators in the clinic
 - Interventions to relax the pelvic girdle and pelvic floor
 - Passive stretching with dilator, progressing to active stretching
- Patient Instruction: Using Instruments at home
 - Exercises (illustrated), relaxation poses (illustrated)
 - Using dilators, vibrators and OhNut®

Procedure for Using Vaginal Weights/Cones

- Desired Clinical Outcomes
- Contraindications
- Procedure: Patient education, progressive functional exercises

Procedure for Bladder Training

- Evidence for Bladder Training to treat overactive bladder
- Desired Clinical Outcomes
- Procedure: Patient Education, Bladder Diary, Intervention
- Patient Instructions: Bladder Training at home
- Patient Instructions: Urge Suppression Strategies

Procedure for Dry Needling for Pelvic Floor

- Caveats
- Desired Clinical Outcomes
- Evidence for Efficacy
 - Sacral Nerves, Pudendal Nerve
 - Posterior Tibial Nerve for treatment of Overactive Bladder
 - Pelvic Pain
- Intervention
 - Diagnosis of TrP's
 - Patient Education

- Procedure for Insertion of Dry Needle
- Adverse Events, Precautions, Contraindications

Procedure for Cold Laser (LLLT)

- Terminology
- Physics and Therapeutic Effects of LLLT; Tissue Absorption
- Extrapolation to Clinical Application for Pelvic Floor Dysfunction
 - Acute and Chronic wounds/scars
 - Inflammatory conditions, Soft Tissue Pain
- Dose Calculation
- Desired Clinical Outcomes
- Precautions/Safe Operation of Equipment
- Intervention: Patient Education, Procedure for Application
- Citations/References for LLLT

Appendices

- Appendix 1 AIDET: Evidence based method for Patient/Customer Interaction
- Appendix 2: Sample conversation to prepare patient for vaginal Assessment
- Appendix 3: Patient information for Dry Needling
- Appendix 4: Standard Precautions vs. Universal Precautions, What is the Difference?
- Appendix 5: Suggested Outcomes Questionnaires for Specific Diagnoses in Pelvic Health
- Appendix 6: Patient Specific Functional Scale. Ready to use Form

Self Reported Health History Form for Female Pelvic Health: Ready to use

Tips and Tools to Facilitate Successful JCAHO Survey in Women's Health: My Experience with several JCAHO surveys

- History
- **Patient Focused Chapters & Application to Therapy Services as applicable***
 - Infection Prevention*
 - Medication Management
 - Provision of Care*
 - Rights and Responsibilities*
- **Organization Focused Chapters & Application to Therapy Services as applicable***
 - Environment of Care
 - Emergency Management
 - Human Resources*
 - Information Management*
 - Leadership
 - Life Safety
 - Medical Staff
 - Performance Improvement*
 - Record of Care*
- **Tracer Methodology and relevance to therapy**
- **National Patient Safety Goals 2022 relevance to therapy**
 - Patient Identifiers NPSG 01
 - Use Alarms Safely NPSG 06
 - Prevent Infection NPSG 07
 - Identify Patient Safety Risks NPSG 15

- **Resources to Access;** JCAHO Manual, Quality and Infection Control Departments, Other Hospitals, Other Rehab Directors, Vendors
- Important Points to Note
- **Therapy Survey: Documentation (actual survey questions and comments)**
- **Therapy Survey: Staff Competency can be assessed (and documented) via**
 - Sample Policy Statement
 - Via Direct Observation of Clinical Interventions
 - Via Inservices
 - Via Attendance at Seminars
 - Via In House Annual "skills fairs" annually. Sample topics; skill demo & test questions
 - Diastasis Rectus Abdominus
 - Perineal biofeedback with external electrodes
 - Abdominal Massage for gas pain and/or sluggish bowels
 - Abdominal Scars
 - Via Written Tests or Quizzes at Staff Meetings (several sample questions)
 - Other CCU activities approved by your State Board(s)
 - Sample Competency Assessment Documentation Form (filled out)
- **Therapy Survey: Staff and Patient Safety**
 - Suggestions for(2) Patient Identifiers
 - Preparedness to Answer Safety/Security Questions
 - Department Bulletin Board Ideas
 - Patient Nourishments/refrigerator temperature logs
- **Therapy Survey: Equipment Safety and Maintenance**
 - All Equipment
 - Fire Extinguishers
 - Cleaning Logs
 - Home paraphernalia
 - Operating Manuals
 - Cleaning Schedules
 - Furniture
 - Hydrocollator Temperature Log (ready to use)
 - Cold Pack Temperature Log (Ready to Use)
 - Refrigerator Temperature Log (Ready to Use)
- **Sample Scope of Services Defined**
- **Checklist** for JCAHO Preparedness (add as you go along)
- **PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES**
 - How to determine your PI Activity(ies)
 - Sample PI within the department: Chart Review for CMS compliance
 - Trend baseline data
 - Set Goals
 - Implement Corrective Actions
 - Reexamine for success - document why/why not
 - Sample PI within the department: High Employee Turnover
 - Trend baseline data
 - Set Goals
 - Implement Corrective Actions
 - Reexamine for success - document why/why not
 - Sample Multidisciplinary PI Activity: Mimizing postpartum falls
 - Sample Multidisciplinary PI Activity: Presurgery Education to minimize delays in starting surgery and facilitating recovery post-op

Closing Statement