

WHY AM I A PELVIC HEALTH PHYSIOTHERAPIST?



I completed my Masters of Physiotherapy in August of 2019, and became an official graduate a few months later. I've worked at SOS Physiotherapy since my graduation, after completing a student physiotherapy placement at SOS Belmont. It's rare that someone graduates from the physiotherapy program with a clear vision of exactly what they want to do upon graduation. The physiotherapy world is broad and exciting, and you can take your degree in hundreds of directions! From cardiac rehabilitation, to mobilizing patients in an intensive care unit, to paediatric specialization, to spinal cord injury rehab, to high performance athletic training, and everything in between! Physios are everywhere, and the opportunities are endless.

I am one of the rare few that knew very early on into my Physiotherapy degree that I wanted to take my practice in a specific direction. As soon as I heard about Health Physiotherapy, I felt that this was an area I needed to specialize my practice in.

Like many folks, I didn't even know I had a pelvic floor, let alone that there was an entire realm of physiotherapy practice dedicated to this aspect of health. Two months into my physio degree, the Ontario Physiotherapy Association (OPA) offered an event at my school all about pelvic physiotherapy. I signed up to attend, and my world opened up. Carolyn Vandyken is an internationally recognized pelvic health expert and presenter, and she described the way pelvic health conditions are misdiagnosed, under-served and missed completely because people don't know about pelvic physiotherapy. I was enraptured, and her 60 minute talk lit a fire in me.

1 in 4 women in Canada deal with some form of urinary incontinence (UI)! That is a staggering number, and UI can dramatically impact a person's quality of life. This is extremely common, but that does not make incontinence NORMAL, and it is never something that we should be satisfied to just go on living with. Pelvic physiotherapy can help!

When women give birth, post-natal care for the baby is the priority. New parents are overwhelmed with information to keep a tiny human alive, in addition to recovering from a marathon feat of physical strength, or a major abdominal surgery! Most moms get cleared at 6 weeks to go "back to normal", with little understanding of how to do so. They're sleep-deprived, stressed, sore, and often experiencing a variety of pelvic symptoms.

When sexual intercourse is painful, some women still get advised to simply "try and relax" or "have a glass of wine". Sexual health is a basic and natural part of being human, and advice to "grin and bear it" is archaic at best. Pelvic pain is multidimensional and treatable. Pelvic physiotherapy can help!

I am passionate about women's health and empowering women to take control of their symptoms. I believe it is so important to recognize the role that pelvic health plays in quality of life. I'm here to talk about all the "taboo" things that you're scared to talk about, and it's my goal to make these conversations as safe, comfortable and normalized as possible. I am so excited to be a part of the SOS Pelvic Health team and continue developing my career in pelvic health!

Jess is a pelvic health physiotherapist at our SOS Northfield location. She has taken additional pelvic health courses on male/female urinary incontinence, male/female pelvic pain, pregnancy & pelvic girdle pain, C-Section birth care, and Diastasis Rectus Abdominus. She is excited to chat with YOU about how pelvic health can help you live life to the fullest.

- Jessica Clancy

INSIDE:

- Understanding Incontinence With Physiotherapy
- Causes Of Incontinence & Chronic Pelvic Pain
- Student Spotlight At SOS Northfield
- Upcoming Virtual Workshops!

UNDERSTANDING INCONTINENCE WITH PHYSIOTHERAPY



Urinary incontinence has a reputation of being something only little old ladies have. But many young people get urinary incontinence. And while more women than men are affected, men can have urinary problems too, especially after prostate surgery. Fortunately, there are many treatments for urinary incontinence.

Behavioral treatment. Some people with urinary incontinence may get relief by making simple lifestyle changes. If you have stress incontinence, for instance, in which you leak urine when you cough, sneeze, or laugh, your physiotherapist may tell you to limit how much you drink. If you have urge incontinence, in which you get the sudden urge to urinate and can't always make it to the bathroom in time, your physiotherapist may tell you to avoid spicy foods, caffeine, and carbonated drinks, because they can irritate the bladder and make the problem worse. Exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles, known as Kegels, can sometimes help people with stress incontinence. Kegels can also help people with urge incontinence. Sometimes, Kegels are combined with biofeedback techniques to help you know if you are doing the exercises properly. For urge incontinence, bladder training, sometimes called bladder retraining, can also help. This involves gradually increasing the interval time between trips to the bathroom, working up to longer and longer intervals between bathroom stops.

Devices and absorbent products. Protective pads and panty liners can help avoid embarrassing situations. A pessary, a plastic device

inserted into the vagina, may help prevent urine leakage by supporting the neck of the bladder; it is most useful for stress incontinence.

Mild to moderate cases of common types of incontinence can be cured or greatly improved by behavioral or exercise therapy. We can also teach you habits and techniques to reduce urgency and urge incontinence (or leaking with a strong urge on the way to the bathroom). Even periodic incontinence is not something you have to deal with. We can help!

Incontinence, Chronic Pelvic Pain, & Physiotherapy

A physiotherapist is highly skilled in evaluating and treating various musculoskeletal and neurological conditions affecting the body. This profession focuses on assessing any underlying factors, such as strength, neuromuscular control, balance, coordination, skeletal alignment, and endurance, which may be contributing to impaired functional mobility, activity participation, and quality of life.

Of course, most people only seek physiotherapy when they're suffering from a common injury or condition such as whiplash, tendonitis, low back pain, ligament sprains, and plantar fasciitis. Perhaps lesser known is that chronic pelvic pain and dysfunction, including incontinence, can also respond positively to physiotherapy intervention.

www.sosphysiotherapy.ca

**SOS PHYSIOTHERAPY IS OPEN FOR VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON TREATMENTS!
CALL ANY ONE OF OUR 3 LOCATIONS**

Belmont Clinic

Belmont Professional Centre
564 Belmont Avenue West, Suite 301
Kitchener, Ontario N2M 5N6
TEL: (519) 743-8787

Elmira Clinic

Behind Wellness Centre (Clock Tower)
3 Wyatt Street East, Suite 2
Elmira, Ontario N3B 2H4
TEL: (519) 669-1212

Northfield Clinic (**Now Open**)

Waterloo Corporate Campus (Sobeys Plaza)
595 Parkside Drive, Suite 5A
Waterloo, Ontario N2L 0C7
TEL: (519) 888-7070

CAUSES OF INCONTINENCE & CHRONIC PELVIC PAIN

If you have pain in your pelvis, it may not always be fully clear what's causing it. **Some common causes of pelvic floor dysfunction and chronic pelvic pain include, but are not limited to:**

- Pregnancy
- Sacroiliac joint dysfunction
- Coccydynia
- Irritation of the pudendal nerve (which originates near the bottom of your spine)
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Levator ani syndrome (increased tension in pelvic floor muscles)
- Post-surgical complications (e.g., pain following a hysterectomy, hernia repair, cesarean section, and/or prostatectomy)

Any of these conditions may lead to inadequate support of the organs contained within your pelvic cavity, increased pressure or inflammation of nerves, muscles, and other connective tissues (including your bladder), and impaired pelvic bone alignment. These symptoms can be frustrating, painful, and embarrassing, and may limit your tolerance to daily participation in desired activities, including exercise.

Other symptoms frequently appear with pelvic pain, including incontinence, bloating, abdominal pressure, reluctance to strain while defecating, and pain in the low back, buttocks, and hips. You may also have decreased tolerance to a variety of activities including sitting or standing, walking, exercise, and sexual intercourse.

How A Physiotherapist Can Treat Pelvic Pain

Every patient presenting with chronic pelvic pain is unique. If you come to see a physiotherapist for your pelvic dysfunction, you'll be taken through a thorough physical examination and patient history questionnaire. He or she will ask you specific questions about your pain, what makes it worse and better, and whether you have a history of any related issues. Based on the results of the examination, your physiotherapist can then develop a customized treatment plan to relieve your symptoms and address the suspected underlying causes to prevent recurring dysfunction.

Struggling with pelvic pain? Frustrated and concerned about incontinence? For both short-term and long-lasting relief without the need from invasive interventions or medications, consider consulting with a physiotherapist today.

Spring Has Sprung



Spring is back, and that means another maple syrup season is here! We're sad that the Elmira Maple Syrup festival had to be cancelled again, but PT Melissa is trying to keep the spirit alive with her own sap boil!

SOS Gets Vaccinated!

SOS Physiotherapy staff are considered a "high priority" group due to our designation as Healthcare Workers. We work daily face-to-face with our valued patients, and it continues to be our priority to keep you safe in our clinics.

Our SOS staff are excited to have received their first dose of the COVID Pfizer vaccine and will be scheduled for our second doses within the 16 week window currently recommended. It was truly a wonderful moment to receive the vaccine!

Check out the SOS family's selfies to commemorate the moment.



CALL ONE OF OUR 3 LOCATIONS TODAY!

SOS Is On Instagram!



Are you an Instagram user? SOS Physiotherapy is! We have been working hard to make our Instagram page an additional resource for our valued patients---our extended SOS family! The SOS Physiotherapy Instagram page is a wealth of information! **Check it out to see:**

- Exercise tips & tricks, including FORM FRIDAYS
- Information on upcoming events, workshops & webinars; as well as quick-links to register
- Wellness tips to keep safe and healthy at home
- Patient Testimonials
- Posts to introduce you to members of the SOS Physiotherapy Team
- Details on SOS Community Engagement
- And SO MUCH MORE!

We're currently in the middle of a pelvic health feature on our page (can you sense a theme this April?) packed with great information! We're excited to use this platform to share our expertise (and our personalities) with the greater community. Feel free to engage with us, ask questions in the comments, and share posts you found helpful!



Follow us on Instagram!
SOS_PHYSIOTHERAPY

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Student Spotlight At SOS Northfield

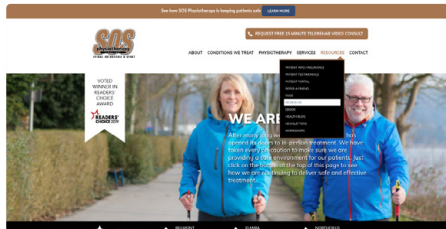


MEET XAVIER!

"Hey there, my name's Xavier Morrissey and I am a second-year physiotherapy student from Western University. Working at the SOS Northfield location has been honestly incredible. The staff have been supportive, the patients have been amazing to work with, and I've genuinely had a great time learning during my placement. Working under Adam, I've gotten a chance to learn tons of hands-on skills as well as further my knowledge and understanding of conditions and presentations. Working with SOS clients has truly been a joy, and as a future clinician, I feel lucky to have gotten the chance to learn from a great organization."



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UPCOMING VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS!

PELVIC HEALTH WORKSHOP!

Visit Our Website To Register // Wednesday, April 14th @ 4:30pm



Hosted by:
Jess, Christine, & Nimmy

LOWER BACK PAIN WORKSHOP!

Visit Our Website To Register // Thursday, April 15th @ 4:30pm



Hosted by:
Stephen & Evan

ROTATOR CUFF & SHOULDER WORKSHOP!

Visit Our Website To Register // Wednesday, April 28th @ 4:30pm



Hosted by:
Adam Dafeo

Workshops are completely free to join. Don't delay, register today with the link above or by calling us now!

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DE-STRESS WITH YOUR BREATH!



Try out some deep **DIAPHRAGMATIC** breathing to de-stress, ease tension in the body, and relax your pelvic floor muscles.

STEP 1: Get into a comfortable position, either lying or sitting.

STEP 2: Place one hand on your upper belly (over the diaphragm or over the lower ribcage), and the other hand over your chest.

STEP 3: Inhale deeply through your nose, focusing on sending the air down to your LOWER hand (the hand over the belly). Try to keep the UPPER hand on your chest almost entirely STILL as you breathe.

STEP 4: Exhale fully through the mouth.

REPEAT! Close your eyes, relax, and turn this into a cyclical, meditative practice. Try to practice this technique for 5-10 minutes, daily as you're able. Breathe your way to a calmer mind and better health!

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