

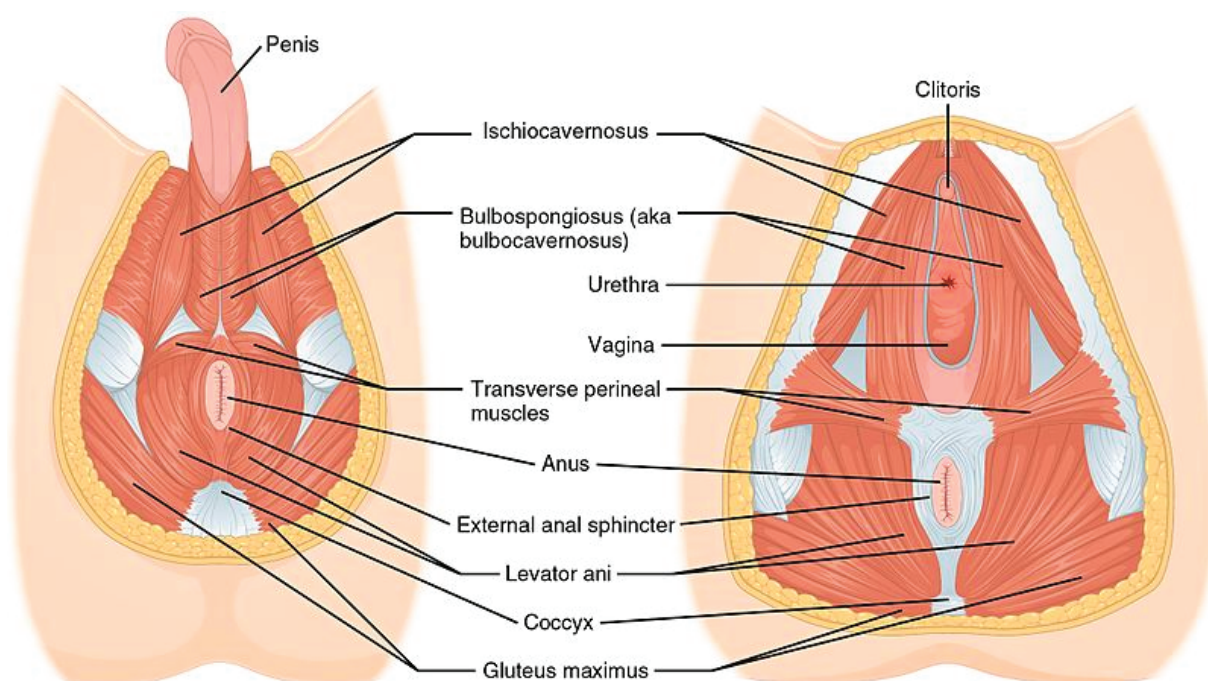
A decorative graphic in the top right corner consisting of three overlapping, elongated, teardrop-like shapes in purple, orange, and light blue.

# PELVIC FLOOR SAFE EXERCISE WORKSHOP



## WHAT ARE THE PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES?

- The Pelvic floor muscles are a layer of muscles that stretch like a trampoline from the pubic bone to the tailbone and side to side to the sit bones, to support the pelvic organs.
- The pelvic organs they support are the bladder and bowel in men and the bladder, bowel and uterus in women.



Male perineal muscles: inferior view

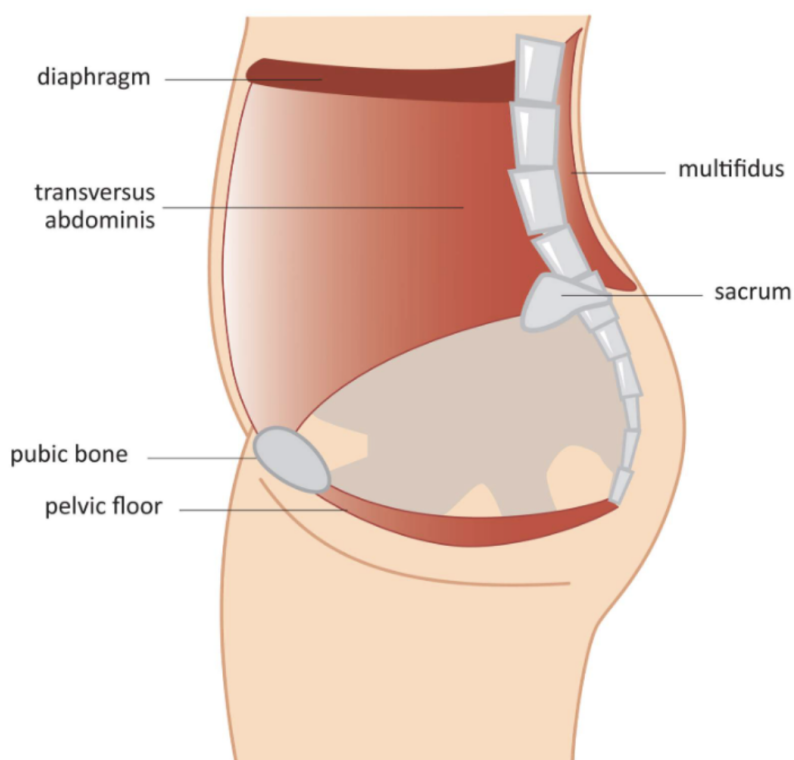
Female perineal muscles: inferior view

## WHAT DO THE PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES DO?

The pelvic floor muscles are part of the group of muscles that form the base of the 'core'. The muscles of the pelvic floor work with the transversus abdominis, the deep back muscles (multifidus), and the diaphragm to stabilise and support the spine, and maintain intra-abdominal pressure.

The pelvic floor helps to maintain bladder and bowel control, preventing the loss of urine, wind and faeces.

Additionally, these muscles also need to relax to allow the bladder and bowel to empty. They also play a role in sexual sensation and function in both men and women.



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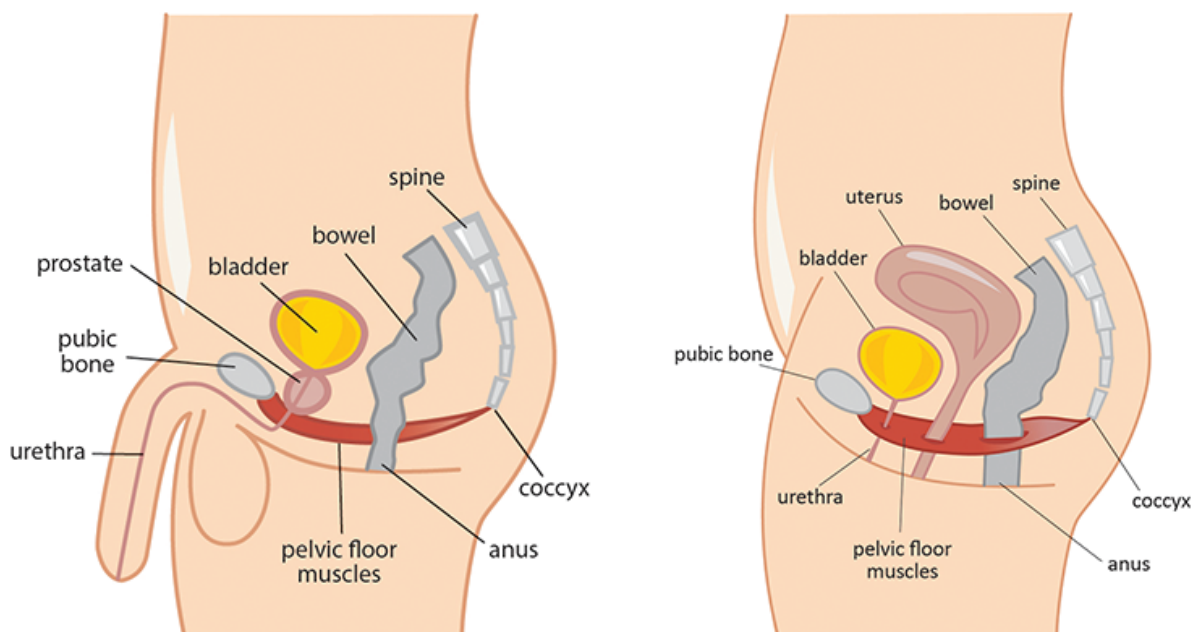
## WHERE ARE THE PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES LOCATED?

The Pelvic floor is like a mesh of muscles going front to back and side to side.

For men, there are two openings within the pelvic floor, the urethra and the anus.

For women, there are three openings in the pelvic floor, the urethra, the vagina and the anus.

SIDE VIEW



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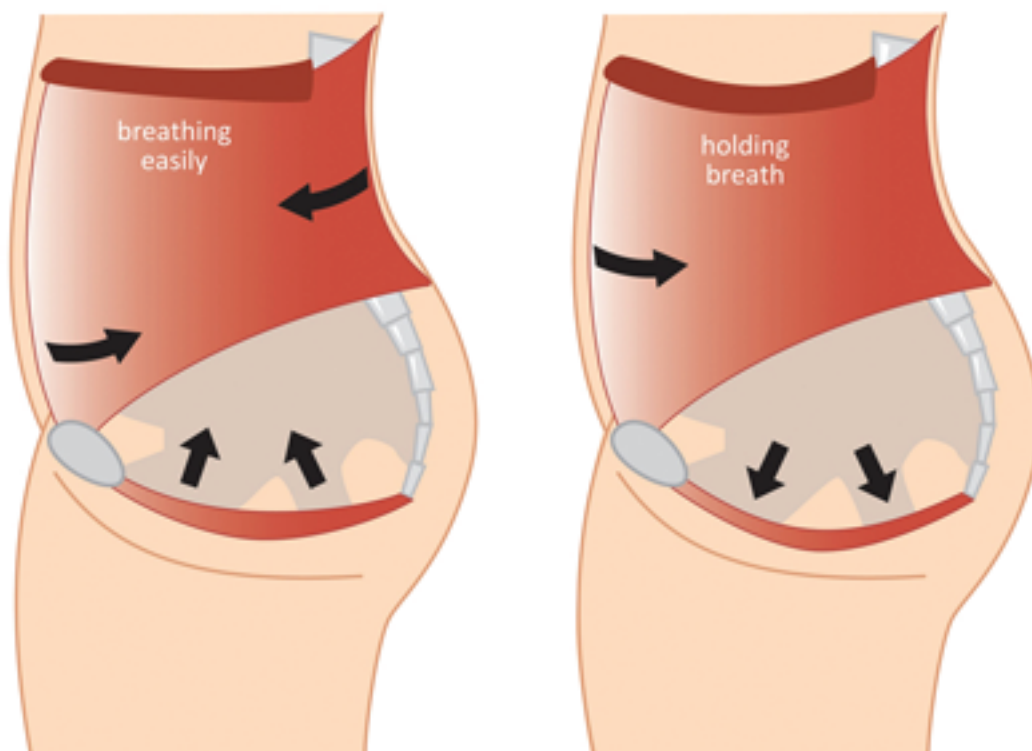


## HOW TO IDENTIFY THE PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES

1. Sit or lie down with the muscles of the thighs, buttocks, and stomach relaxed. Squeeze the ring of muscles around the urethra, vagina (in women) and anus as if trying to stop wee and wind. Then relax the muscles. Squeeze and let go a couple of times to make sure that the right muscles have been identified.
2. If men stand naked in front of a mirror when tightening the pelvic floor muscles, they should see an upward movement of the scrotum and the penis draw in.

A correct pelvic floor muscle contraction is one that increases pressure and closure around the front and back passages and lifts the pelvic organs internally.

### PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLE CONTRACTION



## WHAT TO AVOID

- Exercises that increase Intra-abdominal pressure have the potential to place more stress on the pelvic floor, for example, sit ups, lifting heavy weights or deep squats and lunges.
- Exercises that place a downward force from impact can also place stress on the pelvic floor, for example running, jumping and high impact exercises.

## PELVIC FLOOR SAFE EXERCISES

### CARDIO EXERCISES

- walking
- swimming
- seated cycling
- cross trainer (low resistance)
- low intensity water aerobics
- walking in the water
- low impact exercise classes

### LOW IMPACT EXERCISES

- seated exercises (e.g. shoulder press, rows, bicep curls, knee extensions)
- dumbbell triceps extensions (lying or one arm and leg propped on bench)
- dumbbell exercises on a Swiss ball
- shallow and narrow leg squats
- shallow Swiss ball wall squats
- prone leg curl
- shallow forward lunges
- dumbbell row,
- pec deck
- supine bench/Swiss ball press
- wall push ups
- floor bridge.



## WHO IS AT RISK?

- Anyone who has been through menopause.
- Anyone who has undergone surgery for a hysterectomy or prostate cancer.
- Anyone who has had a baby or has been pregnant.

## PELVIC FLOOR SCREENING TOOL

Pelvic Floor First  
<https://www.pelvicfloorfirst.org.au/>  
1800 33 00 66

## PELVIC FLOOR SCREENING TOOL

See Pelvic Floor First  
*Protect your Pelvic Floor and stay in control*  
handout.

