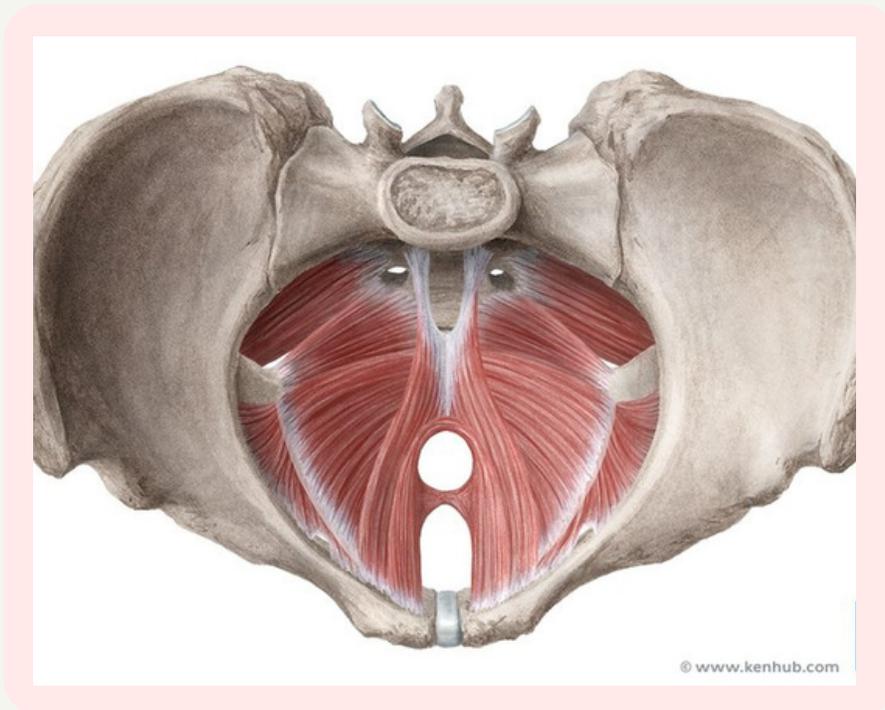




**the BEHAN PROTOCOL  
FOR BETTER BACK AND SPINE HEALTH**

# THE PELVIC FLOOR

WHAT IS IT, WHERE IS IT AND WHY DOES IT MATTER??



**The pelvic floor is the base of your core musculature and is shaped like a hammock that runs from your pubic bone at the front to your tail bone at the back.**

**The pelvic floor muscles have a number of different roles;**

- **supporting the organs within the pelvis (bladder, bowel, intestines and uterus)**
- **working with the deep abdominals, spinal muscles and diaphragm to give you effective core control**
- **play an important role in supporting sexual function and sensation**

## Common Symptoms of Pelvic Floor Weakness

- leaking urine when you cough, laugh or sneeze or move in a particular way
- a need to go to the toilet more frequently
- an inability to control the passing of wind
- painful intercourse
- reduced sexual sensation

## Common Causes of Pelvic Floor Weakness

- surgeries (for bladder, bowel or prostate)
- pregnancy and child birth
- repetitive heavy lifting (even at the gym)
- a long term cough
- straining to empty your bowels
- being overweight

# HELPFUL TIPS FOR MAINTAINING YOUR PELVIC FLOOR

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Avoid constipation – seek help from your GP if this is an issue
- Drink plenty of fluids – do not restrict intake as it can make the symptoms worse
- Practice ‘the knack’ this is contracting the pelvic floor quickly when you need to cough or sneeze
- Share the lifting of heavy loads
- Get advice on exercises that may strain the pelvic floor such as running, double leg lowers, heavy weights, straight leg sit ups – you may need to train up to do these safely, ask your physio
- Ensure you empty the bladder fully when you go
- See your doctor if you have a condition that causes persistent cough, they may be able to help with relief for this



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