



# ATHLETE PELVIC FLOOR HEALTH



### SYMPTOMS OF A PELVIC FLOOR DISORDER MAY INCLUDE:

- ✓ leaking urine during training or with coughing, laughing, sneezing or due to a strong urge
- ✓ needing to rush to the toilet
- ✓ a constant need to urinate
- ✓ losing control of wind or bowel motions
- ✓ dragging, bulging or heaviness sensation in the vagina
- ✓ pain in the pelvic region
- ✓ painful sex

**You don't have to suffer in silence. Telling a member of your performance and support staff, or a health professional about your symptoms will allow them to recommend an appropriate treatment plan.**



### PELVIC FLOOR HEALTH FOR ALL ATHLETES

Many female athletes report pelvic floor symptoms. On average 25-45% of female athletes report leaking urine during training or competition.

Athletes involved in high-impact sports that require jumping, landing and sprinting commonly experience pelvic floor symptoms, as well as endurance and weight lifting athletes.

Post-natal athletes may be at risk of pelvic floor disorders, but young athletes and those who have not had children also commonly experience symptoms.

While pelvic floor symptoms are very common in female athletes, they should not be considered normal. Symptoms can impact sport performance and training so it is important to seek help.

There is still much research needed to understand why many athletes experience pelvic floor symptoms. Sport can place an increased load on the pelvic floor. Pelvic floor symptoms may occur if the pelvic floor muscles are not strong enough, or have poor coordination or timing during high-impact activities.

Exercises called pelvic floor muscle training can improve the strength, endurance and coordination of your pelvic floor muscles and reduce or cure pelvic floor symptoms.

Many women find it difficult to correctly contract their pelvic floor muscles without help. A physiotherapist or health professional with specific training in pelvic floor disorders can help you manage your pelvic floor symptoms and ensure you are performing exercises correctly.

**For more information visit [ais.gov.au/fphi](https://ais.gov.au/fphi)**