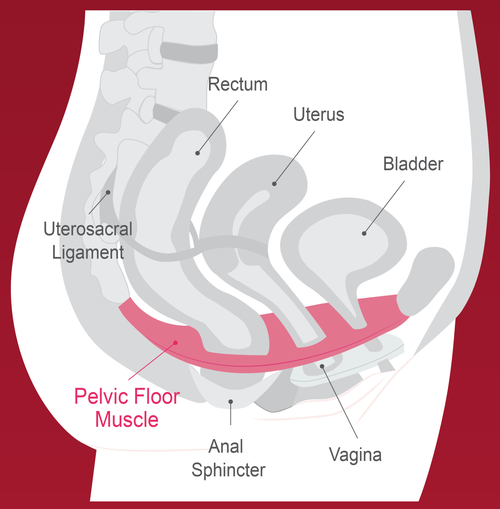
Movement and Pelvic Floor Function: Promoting Postpartum Recovery and Preventing Incontinence

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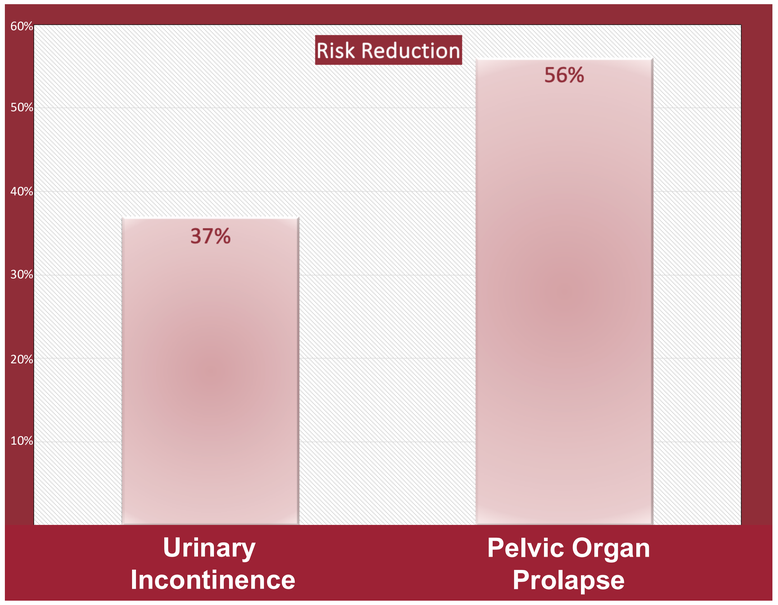
OVERVIEW

Pregnancy and childbirth place significant stress on the pelvic floor and increase the risk of urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse. This literature review summarizes recent evidence evaluating the role of pelvic floor muscle training and physical activity in promoting postpartum recovery. Current evidence demonstrates that pelvic floor muscle training is an effective first-line intervention for reducing urinary incontinence while gradual return to physical activity improves recovery and quality of life. These findings support incorporating pelvic floor rehabilitation into routine prenatal and postpartum care.



Pelvic Floor Muscle Training:

- First-line conservative treatment
- Improves pelvic floor muscle strength
- ↓ 37% urinary incontinence
- ↓ 56% pelvic organ prolapse



METHODS

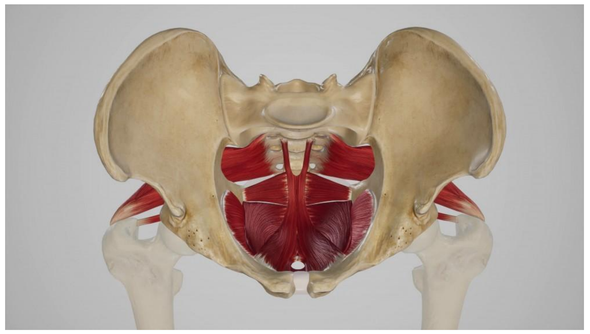
A structured review of recent peer-reviewed literature was conducted using PubMed. Five articles published in **2025 and 2026** were selected based on their relevance to postpartum pelvic floor dysfunction, pelvic floor muscle training, postpartum exercise, and urinary incontinence. The studies were analyzed for themes related to intervention timing, exercise adherence, pelvic floor strength, urinary continence, and clinical recommendations to identify evidence-based strategies for promoting postpartum recovery.

Clinical Findings:

- Prenatal PFMT provides postpartum benefits.
- Consistency is more important than exact timing.
- Education improves adherence.
- Early intervention leads to better outcomes.
- Referral to pelvic floor PT when symptoms persist.

Movement Beyond PFMT:

- Walking
- Core strengthening
- Flexibility exercises
- Improves recovery
- Improves confidence
- Improves quality of life



CONCLUSION:

Pelvic floor muscle training and **regular physical activity** are safe, effective interventions that promote **postpartum recovery** and reduce the risk of **urinary incontinence**. Current evidence supports incorporating **early pelvic floor education**, **consistent exercise**, and **individualized rehabilitation** into routine prenatal and postpartum care. Improving patient education and long-term adherence to pelvic floor muscle training may strengthen pelvic floor function, enhance **quality of life**, and reduce the long-term burden of postpartum pelvic floor disorders.