



## PHYSIOTHERAPY AND PROSTATE SURGERY

Urinary incontinence in the form of stress urinary incontinence and/or urge urinary incontinence is very common after prostate surgery. Research indicates that the causes of persistent urinary incontinence post-operatively include internal sphincter deficiency due to injury and detrusor overactivity. Therefore, pelvic floor muscle function is important to improve urethral support and inhibit detrusor overactivity.<sup>1</sup>

Erectile dysfunction is also common post-operatively. Pelvic floor exercises are proven to be effective in men with erectile dysfunction as the muscles help provide rigidity and maintain blood flow for erection.<sup>2</sup>

### When to refer?

The best time for your patient to book an appointment is as soon as possible **before** surgery. The sooner they can be seen pre-operatively, the more time they will have to master their pelvic floor exercises and improve bladder and bowel habits. This will set up good habits before surgery, and will mean they won't be overwhelmed with information after surgery.

### What will physiotherapy sessions involve?

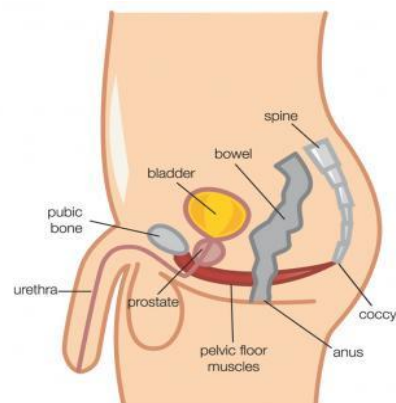
#### Pre-operative:

- Thorough assessment of bladder and bowel habits
- Training in a correct pelvic floor contraction
- Provision of a pelvic floor home exercise program
- Advice regarding setting up good bladder and bowel habits
- Advice about what to expect and how to look after the pelvic floor initially post-operatively.

#### Post-operative:

- Review bladder and bowels
- Graduated pelvic floor exercise program
- Education about how other core muscles work with the pelvic floor
- Guidance for safe return to exercise and the activities your patient enjoys.

We also have a Pump for Men exercise class they can attend! This is a physiotherapist-led exercise group designed to improve postural awareness, pelvic floor and core strength and can also help to target their own individual goals and return back to the physical activity they enjoy. Many men in this group also find it is a great social support during the peri-operative time.



<sup>1</sup>Siegel (2014). *Pelvic Floor Muscle Training in Males: Practical Applications*. *Urology* 84(1). 1-7.

<sup>2</sup>Dorey et al. (2004). *Randomised controlled trial of pelvic floor muscle exercises and manometric biofeedback for erectile dysfunction*. *Br J Gen Pract*(508)819-825.

