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## **Pelvic Floor Exercises & Pelvic Physical Therapy Directory for Pregnant & Postpartum Individuals**

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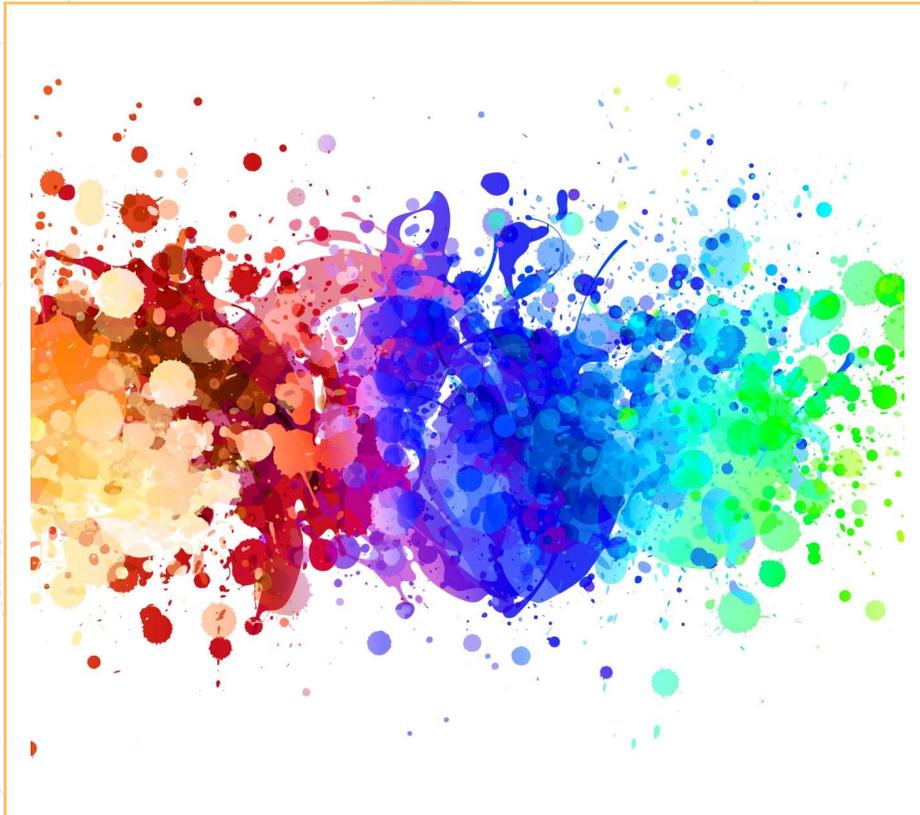
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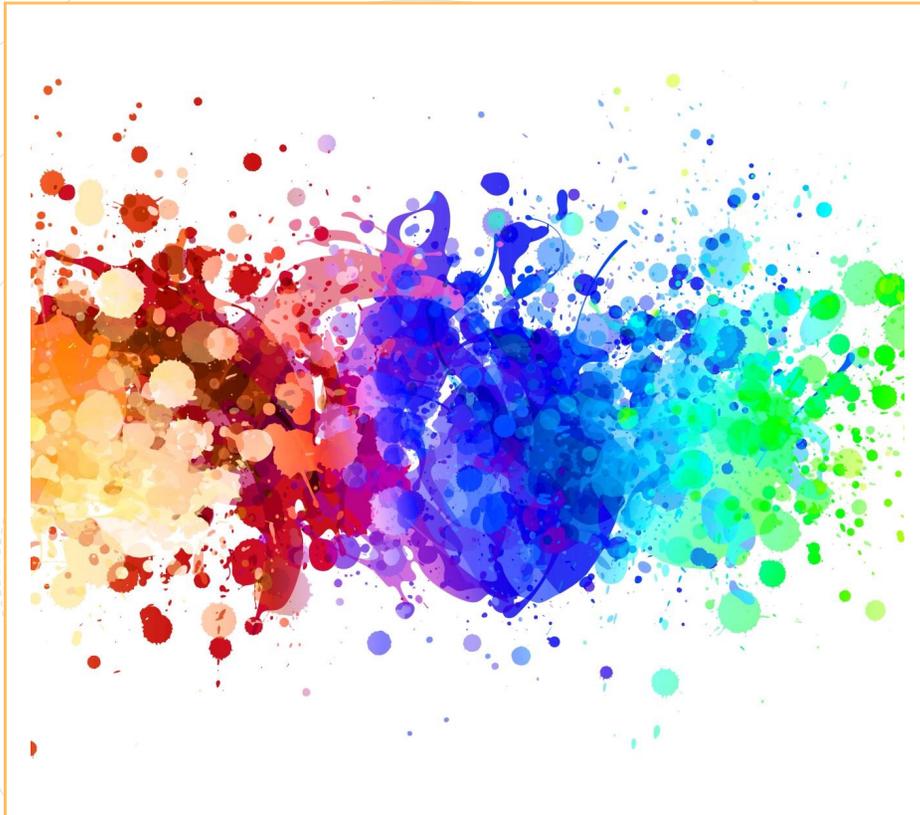


# Pelvic Floor Exercises & Pelvic Physical Therapy Directory for Pregnant & Postpartum Individuals

**Matt Breseman**

**Colchester Family Medicine**

**07/11/22-08/12/2022**



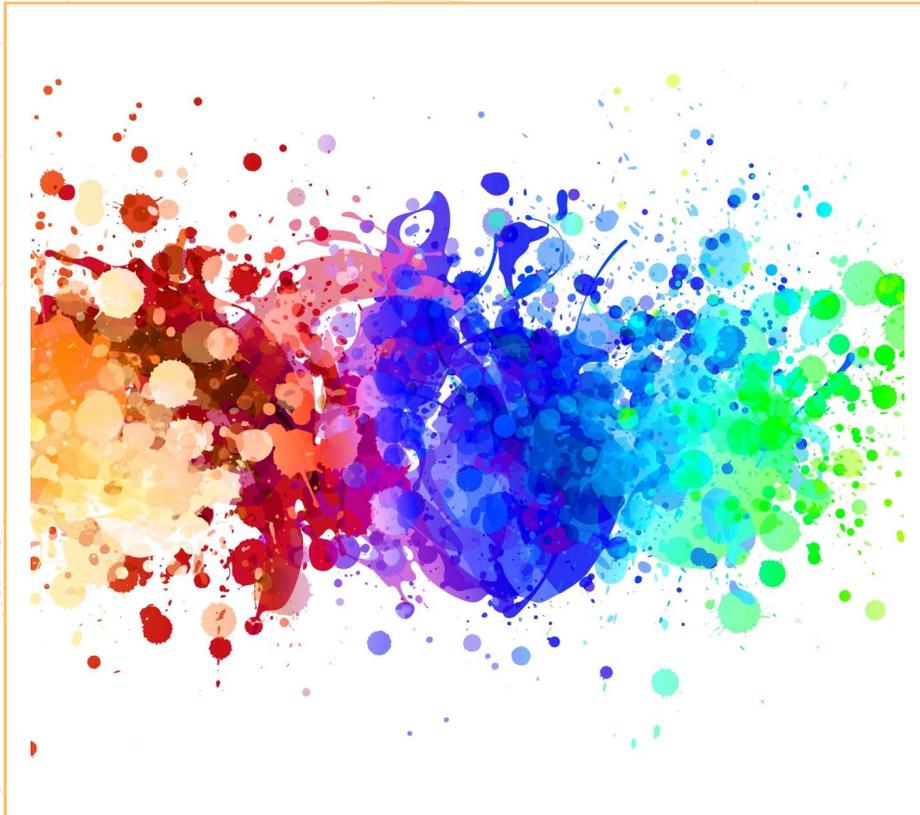
## Problem Identification

- During my time at Colchester FM, I learned about the importance of pelvic floor exercise for preventing urinary incontinence
- Speaking with pregnant and postpartum patients I also learned a few of them had urinary incontinence.
  - However, the time commitment and fatigue associated with having a newborn at home was a barrier to seeking help controlling their symptoms
- Therefore, the goal of this project was to create a pelvic floor exercise resource and local pelvic physical therapy directory that could easily be shared with both pregnant and postpartum patients who might benefit from the information.
- The AHEC Focus Area of the project is Interprofessional Education



## Cost and Considerations

- 1/7 women have surgery for pelvic organ prolapse or urinary incontinence in their lifetime<sup>2</sup>
  - The direct cost for treatment exceeds \$1 billion per year in the US<sup>2</sup>
  - Pregnancy and childbirth are major risk factors for pelvic floor disorders<sup>2</sup>
- Multiple studies have shown that pelvic floor exercises performed during pregnancy significantly lowers the risk of urinary incontinence more than 6 months after childbirth<sup>1,2</sup>
- Kegel exercises are a popular group of pelvic floor exercises that can be implement at home and have been shown to reduce urinary incontinence<sup>1,3</sup>

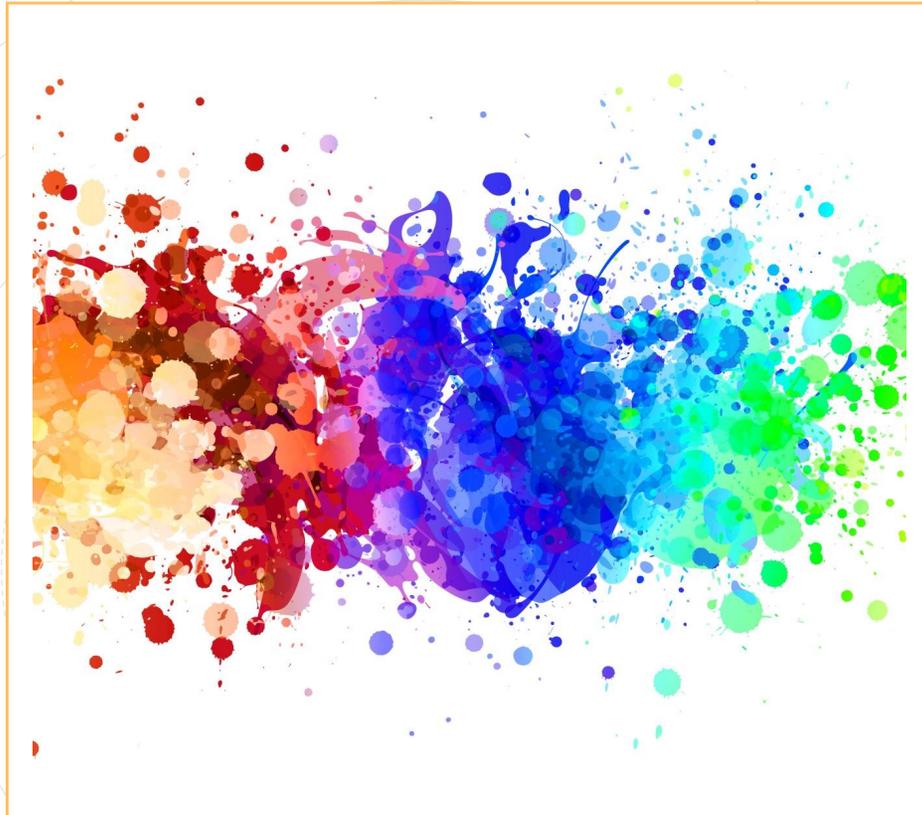


## Community Perspective and Support for Project

“...[Chronic pelvic pain and urinary incontinence issues are] not something women should just expect to have and live with because they have carried and delivered babies.”

- Stephanie Douglas, PT

- Do you believe giving pregnant & postpartum patients (or postpartum individuals at their child's 1<sup>st</sup> well visit) an exercise packet consisting of a few exercises to complete at home as well as a list of local pelvic health physical therapists would be a valuable resource?
  - “Yes, this would be a good start and if the patient is having trouble with the exercises or issues that are not resolved with a simple progression of post-partum exercises, contact with a PT clinic would be advised.” - Stephanie Douglas, PT



## Intervention and Methodology

- An EPIC dotphrase was created that could easily be added to After Visit Summaries or Communications to patients
- The EPIC dotphrase contains:
  - Written instructions on how to perform Kegel exercises at home
  - A list of local pelvic physical therapy locations, collected from a Google search of “pelvic physical therapy near Colchester, VT”
  - A link to a website containing a national database of certified pelvic physical therapists to assist patients with finding a provider at location that is most convenient for them.
- To access the dotphrase, open the smartphrase manager then search for user “Breseman, Matthew”
- The dotphrase is titled “PELVICFLOOREXERCISESANDPTLOCATIONS”

## Contents of the Dotphrase

### KEGEL INSTRUCTIONS

General Recommendations When Performing Kegels from Yount SM et al.<sup>1</sup>

- If BMI >30 advise person to lose weight.
- Locate the right muscles:
  - (1) Pretend you are trying to avoid passing gas
  - (2) Pretend to tighten your vagina around a tampon or penis
  - (3) You should feel Kegels more toward the back of the pelvic area.
  - (4) Imagine you are sitting on a marble and tighten your pelvic muscles as if you are lifting the marble.
- Another method is to stop urinating midstream (not first of day) identify the muscles used-use only to identify muscles.
- To evaluate strength: stop urination and feel if these are the same muscles used during Kegels or practice during sexual intercourse with partner feedback.
- Quality is better than quantity; increase gradually to recommendations.
- Try to do at the same time you do something else everyday to remember to do them daily.
- Start learning lying on back to engage only posterior pelvic muscles. Progress to perform sitting or standing.
- Try to start with empty bladder.
- Do not engage abdominal, thighs or buttocks muscles.
- Do not hold your breath.

### References:

1. Yount SM, Fay RA, Kissler KJ. Prenatal and Postpartum Experience, Knowledge and Engagement with Kegels: A Longitudinal, Prospective, Multisite Study. J Womens Health (Larchmt). 2021 Jun;30(6):891-901. doi: 10.1089/jwh.2019.8185. Epub 2020 Sep 15. PMID: 32931374; PMCID: PMC8336225.

### LIST OF LOCAL PELVIC PT LOCATIONS / DIRECTORY OF HOW TO FIND A PELVIC PT IN ALTERNATE LOCATION

#### Pelvic Health

1 Kennedy Drive U3-4  
South Burlington, VT 05403  
Phone: 802-863-3323  
Fax: 802-863-3288  
<https://pelvichealthvermont.com>

#### Phoenix PT

1775 Williston Road, Suite 104,  
South Burlington, VT 05403  
phone: 802-863-6662  
fax: 802-861-2224  
email: [phnxpt@phoenixpt.com](mailto:phnxpt@phoenixpt.com)  
<https://phoenixpt.com/contact-us/>

#### Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery

792 College Parkway Fanny Allen Campus, Medical Office Building, Suite 101  
Colchester, VT 05446-3052  
Phone: 802-847-5800  
Fax: 802-847-4151  
<https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/conditions-and-treatments/pelvic-floor-physical-therapy>

#### Orthopedics and Rehabilitation Center

192 Tilley Drive  
South Burlington, VT 05403-4440  
Phone: 802- 847-7910  
Fax: 802-847-7470  
[Orthopedics and Rehabilitation Center | The University of Vermont Health Network \(uvmhealth.org\)](https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/conditions-and-treatments/pelvic-floor-physical-therapy)

#### Catamount PT

289 Rye Circle Suite South Burlington, VT 05403  
Phone: (802) 864-0015  
Fax: (802) 863-4988  
Email: [stacy@catamountpt.com](mailto:stacy@catamountpt.com)  
<https://catamountpt.com/pelvic-floor-therapy/>

#### New Moon PT & Wellness (Mobile PT)

Tel: (802)-851-7707  
Fax: (802) 419-9606  
Email: [davida@newmoonpt.com](mailto:davida@newmoonpt.com)  
Location: We are mobile! Treating surrounding Addison and Chittenden Counties, VT (zip codes 05753 and 05401)  
<https://www.newmoonpt.com>

#### Nation Database to Search for Registered Pelvic PT in Location Most Convenient to Patient

<https://pelvicrehab.com>



## Results/Response

- The project received positive verbal feedback from providers at the Colchester Family Medicine practice
- At the time I finished my rotation, the dotpharse had been shared with one patient



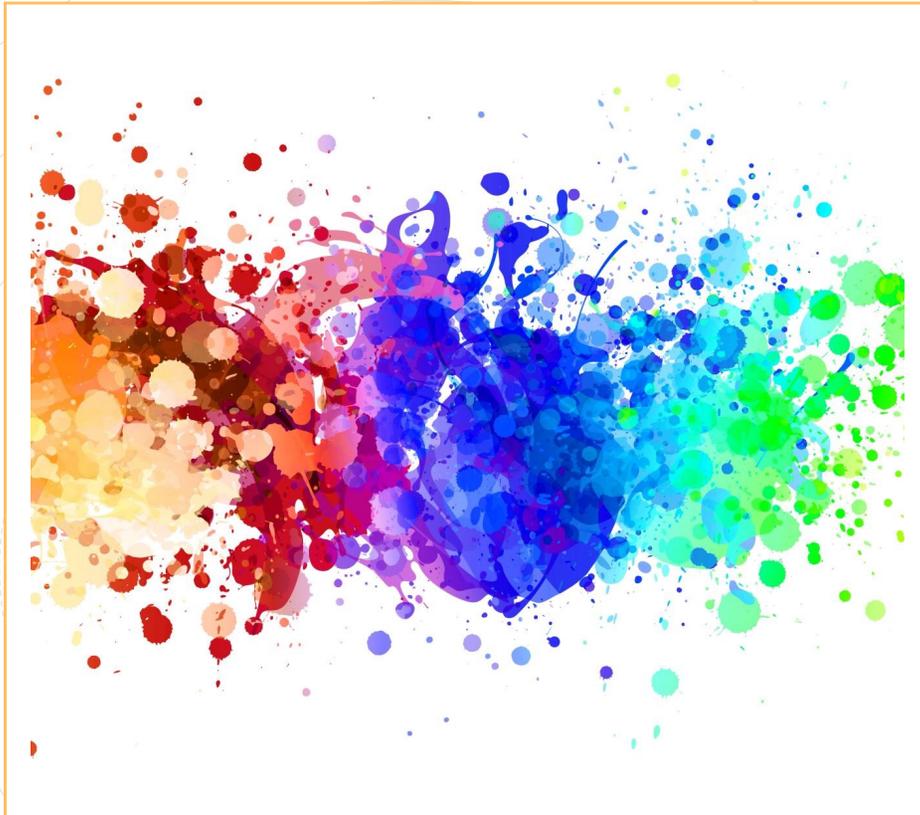
## Evaluation of Effectiveness and Limitations

- An evaluation of this project would potentially include information tracking how often the template is shared with patients
- Another way to evaluate the project would be by asking patients for subjective feedback about the information provided at their next office visit
- Qualitative data could be acquired by asking patients to complete a standardized questionnaire that evaluates various metrics regarding the effectiveness of the project



## Recommendation for Future Interventions/Projects

- Future interventions/projects could aim to expand upon the written instruction provided by identifying links to quality videos demonstrating pelvic floor exercises
- Future interventions/projects could also construct a survey for Colchester Family Medicine patients to complete to evaluate the effectiveness of the project



## References

1. Yount SM, Fay RA, Kissler KJ. Prenatal and Postpartum Experience, Knowledge and Engagement with Kegels: A Longitudinal, Prospective, Multisite Study. *J Womens Health (Larchmt)*. 2021 Jun;30(6):891-901. doi: 10.1089/jwh.2019.8185. Epub 2020 Sep 15. PMID: 32931374; PMCID: PMC8336225.
2. Nygaard IE, Clark E, Clark L, Egger MJ, Hitchcock R, Hsu Y, Norton P, Sanchez-Birkhead A, Shaw J, Sheng X, Varner M. Physical and cultural determinants of postpartum pelvic floor support and symptoms following vaginal delivery: a protocol for a mixed-methods prospective cohort study. *BMJ Open*. 2017 Jan 10;7(1):e014252. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2016-014252. PMID: 28073797; PMCID: PMC5253561.
3. Huang YC, Chang KV. Kegel Exercises. [Updated 2022 May 8]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2022 Jan-. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK555898/>