

WHY YOUR CORE WON'T WORK

Get to the bottom of your BACK, HIP or PELVIC PAIN, URINARY DYSFUNCTION and/or SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION WITHOUT MEDICATION OR SURGERY or Doing Kegels



Get to the CORE of the Problem

If you or a loved one have pain or dysfunction - **so bad that it stops you from doing activities that you love like walking, running, exercising or being intimate** - then reading this may be the most important step you take in changing your life. It can unlock the mystery of your "new normal" after having a baby, injury or surgery. Maybe you have no obvious reason for this problem or you have seen multiple doctors and providers who have not offered solutions for your condition other than medication or surgery. We are here to tell you there is a solution, you don't have to suffer and there is hope!

Since 2009, we have seen thousands of individuals in our clinic who have found lasting relief and have gained freedom to move and function. Our team of specially trained physical therapists understand your frustration. We have personally experienced some of the same problems and we have spent the past 30 years learning and developing a system that actually works. We believe in the body's inherent ability to heal, in the connectedness of body systems and in treating the WHOLE instead of individual parts. Dysfunction of the deep core affects many other parts of the body, which is why it is common to have other dysfunctions like knee, hip, back and even jaw pain.

Think of the CORE as the first string on a team. When there is an injury, the inherent control of these muscles is altered and the core team is benched. The coach sends the second string team into the game, but the team struggles until the CORE is fully back in the game. The problem is, the CORE does not receive the proper rehab and after a while becomes so frustrated that it stays home from the game and gives up hope of ever returning. Sound familiar? **The reason your CORE is not functioning optimally is NOT YOUR FAULT!** You most likely did not receive the help you needed *at the time your core was disrupted*; after a sports injury, during and after pregnancy, surgery or trauma such as a fall. The good news is that there is a predictable pattern of improvement once inflammation, pain and movement loss is addressed.

THREE STEPS TO A HEALTHY CORE

1. **REDUCE INFLAMMATION AND PAIN** - Swelling is a natural response to protect tissues from further harm. Swelling compresses nerves and muscles, contributing to muscle dysfunction and pain. In addition, inflammation in the gut from the Standard American Diet (SAD) further inhibits muscle function through the *viscerosomatic reflex*. Imagine tightening your abdominal muscles when you are bloated and in pain. Constipation and voiding dysfunctions contribute further to abnormal muscle patterns since the pelvic floor muscles are supposed to relax during urination and defecation (and sex), but might be clenched and tight. At Healthy Core, our physical therapists are experts at resolving pain by getting to the *source* of the pain and inflammation.

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2. **RESTORE MOBILITY** - Tightness in the hips or upper back (thoracic spine) can challenge the deep core muscles. In order for the lumbar spine (lower spine) segments to be stabilized by the core, the segments above and below it must be mobile. In many individuals with CORE issues, the opposite occurs. The hips and upper back are tight and the core is weak. This can contribute to a vicious cycle of pain and dysfunction within the pelvis. In addition, the deep hip rotator muscles attach to the pelvic floor like a hammock and can affect muscle tension and pelvic joint alignment. Imagine pulling a hammock from one side (hip tension on one side) or from both sides to make it taut. We can use this to our advantage by activating the pelvic floor muscles using hip rotation.

Adhesions are also a factor when it comes to CORE muscle dysfunction, affecting the mobility of muscles, nerves, organs and blood vessels. Adhesions occur when the brain holds the connective tissue tight in order to protect it from further trauma, injury or surgery. Muscles need to go through the full range of motion in order to function optimally. It is important to *lengthen before you strengthen*. In other words, mobility needs to be restored before the core can function properly. At Healthy Core, our physical therapists are experts in providing manual therapy for adhesions and tightness in order to improve mobility.

3. **RETRAIN CORE FUNCTION** - The deep core is a team of four muscles that work together, or synergistically. When we meet with you, we will instruct you in many ways to engage deep core muscles using your breath to lengthen muscles so the core muscles can contract on the exhale. We utilize yoga and Pilates principles to encourage tight muscles to relax and weak muscles to contract. In addition to the deep core muscles, we will instruct you in exercises to do at home to encourage the gluteal muscles to stabilize the pelvic girdle, along with the quadriceps and hamstrings to strengthen your legs and back. Often we have to downtrain “helper” muscles in order to get the correct muscles working for you. At Healthy Core, we give you the tools you need to restore core function, even if it has been several years since you had a baby, surgery or injury.

BONUS: BLADDER and BOWEL TIPS

In addition to getting to the bottom of your problem, we will empower you in ways to improve bladder and bowel function, as well as sexual function. This can prevent symptoms from returning and give you life-long skills for a healthy core. Here are a few things you will learn:

1. EXHALE to activate the core with lifting and exercise. For example, when you get out of a chair or lift anything, blow out and exhale at the start of the movement. "BLOW AS YOU GO."
2. Don't go to the bathroom "JUST IN CASE" which trains your bladder to hold less urine. Try spacing out your trips to the bathroom instead.
3. Stop and breathe deeply if you experience urinary urgency. Urges come in waves and will dissipate often within 30 seconds. Do not hurry or rush to the bathroom during the urge. You can also try briskly rubbing your hands together for 30 seconds to reduce the fight or flight response.
4. Avoid constipation by consuming enough water to keep your urine diluted, consuming fiber and massaging your abdomen to promote gut motility (we can teach you how to do this).
5. Move your body. Regular exercise can balance your blood sugar, maintain a healthy weight and regulate your nervous system.

BONUS TIP: SEX!

We want you to thrive in every area of your life, including your sex life! Intimacy doesn't have to be affected by pelvic floor dysfunction. Muscles cannot relax and contract properly if they are shortened by muscle knots or myofascial trigger points. When we meet with you, we will identify what is restricting muscle movement and get to the bottom of the problem. This allows the muscles to function as they were designed to, improving sensation and ability to climax. Deep *diaphragm breaths*, also known as *reverse Kegels*, is one way to release pelvic floor muscle tension and we will help you learn how to do this effectively.

COMMON CONDITIONS RELATED TO CORE DYSFUNCTION

It is not uncommon to have more than one condition related to core dysfunction. These are the most common complaints individuals seek help for at our clinic:

- Back pain, hip pain, knee pain or foot pain
- Diastasis recti (midline split of rectus abdominal muscles)
- Pelvic floor dysfunction
- Pelvic pain (abdominal pain, menstrual cramps, pain with penetration/ intimacy)
- Pelvic organ prolapse (bladder, bowel, uterus and/or urethra)
- Sacroiliac (SI) joint dysfunction, pelvic girdle pain (PGP)
- Urinary incontinence, urinary urgency, urinary frequency (going to the bathroom more than eight times in a 24-hour period) or nocturia (waking at night to void)

In conclusion, if you are avoiding social activities, exercise or intimacy for fear of not being in control of your life, it is time to seek help from an expert who can solve your problem. Even if it has been several years, the CORE muscles can be retrained.

TAKE ACTION NOW! THERE IS A SOLUTION!

We are currently offering a **FREE VIRTUAL CONSULTATION** with one of our core physical therapist specialists. You will discover:

1. What is preventing your deep core muscles from working properly
2. How to resolve pain and dysfunction without medication and/or surgery
3. How to get back to a healthy, pain-free lifestyle

If this resonates with you, we want to hear from you! Let's talk about what you have done that has NOT WORKED and what you can be doing differently to have a healthy core! We *will address issues that other providers will not even ask about or understand* in a safe and relaxing environment to maximize the healing process. To schedule your FREE visit with one of our pelvic health experts to learn more and to find out if we are the right clinic for you, call our office at **(330) 528-0034**. We will be glad to assist you with any questions you might have. You deserve to be the BEST VERSION of YOU and to live life with a healthy core!