



Talking With Your Doctor

Helpful Tips for Starting Talks about Pelvic Floor Disorders

It can be difficult to talk about problems such as incontinence or vaginal bulges, even with a doctor. But doctors are used to talking about these problems, and it's worth asking about your symptoms because they can be treated. Your doctor may refer you to a urogynecologist – an expert in treating these problems – if your doctor thinks a specialist can help. Here are some tips to get the conversation started.

What should I tell my doctor?

1. My last pelvic exam was _____ (days, weeks, months, years) ago.
2. I have _____ child(ren) and delivered _____ (vaginally/by cesarean section).
3. I'm having some or all of the following symptoms:
 - Pain, pressure or a bulge "down there"
 - Trouble urinating or passing a bowel movement
 - "Leaking" or needing to use the bathroom often
 - Pain during urination
4. My symptoms started _____ (days, weeks, months, years) ago.
5. I have these symptoms _____ (daily, a few times a week, sometimes, etc.).
6. I want to find ways to treat or cure these symptoms.

Also, be sure to tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking and any allergies you may have.

What should I ask my doctor?

1. Do you think I have symptoms of a pelvic floor disorder?
 - If so, what kind of pelvic floor disorder(s) do I have?
2. What is causing my symptoms?
3. Will my symptoms get better?
4. What can I do to lessen or end these symptoms?
5. Do you see a lot of other patients like me?
6. Do you know of any doctors who specialize in treating my symptoms, such as urogynecologists?
 - If so, can you refer me to someone you would recommend?
7. Will you work with the specialist to make sure he or she knows about my medical history?
8. Can I contact you again to ask your advice after seeing a specialist?
9. What should I do next?
10. If I think of more questions later, can I call or e-mail you?