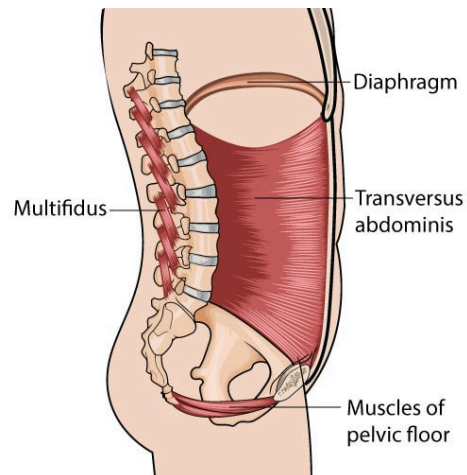


The Pelvic Floor and Lifting

Key concept → Intra Abdominal Pressure (IAP)

Every time you lift = body generates interabdominal pressure



Diaphragm on top
Pelvic floor is the base
Abdominal wall/ deep core wraps around
Back muscles make up the back

System working well = pelvic floor anticipates the load and automatically activates and supports
→ Postpartum this system is impacted

We need to focus on restoring **coordination**.

The exhale trick

Simple tool = your breath

Remember...

When you exhale → diaphragm rises and pelvic floor lifts

So - exhaling on the effort (hardest part of the movement) means you're engaging your pelvic floor without having to think about "squeezing".

We want to avoid breath holding - as this may put pressure on the pelvic floor.

Breathe in to prepare. Exhale as you lift.

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PHYSIOTHERAPY

ACTIVITY: Next time you pick up your baby - breathe OUT as you come up.

Symptoms with lifting

If you are leaking, feeling pressure/ heaviness or pain with lifting - your body is telling you the load is too much for what the system can handle right now.

It doesn't mean stop forever, just that we need to scale back and then build strength gradually.

E.g. Squat regression

Heavy back squat → squat with bar → squat to box with bar → squat to box unweighted

The return to lifting timeline

Note - this isn't the same for everyone and depends on training history, current symptoms and recovery so far.

0-6 weeks:

Reconnection only - breathing, gentle walks, no load.

6-12 weeks:

Body weight and light resistance, symptom free.

3-6 months:

Start progressive loading, build back movement patterns and then focus on strength rebuild.

6 months +:

Strength progression.

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PHYSIOTHERAPY

Am I ready to increase load?

- I have good pelvic floor coordination
- No pressure or heaviness in the pelvis during or after exercise
- No leaking during or after lifting or exercise
- No pelvic or lower back pain with current load
- I feel confident and in control of my body during movement

Ticked yes to all = you're ready to progress

Some no's? Not to worry. We may just need to modify technique and build strength further to progress safely.

Working with a PT? Ask for feedback on your technique, particularly around lumbopelvic positioning.