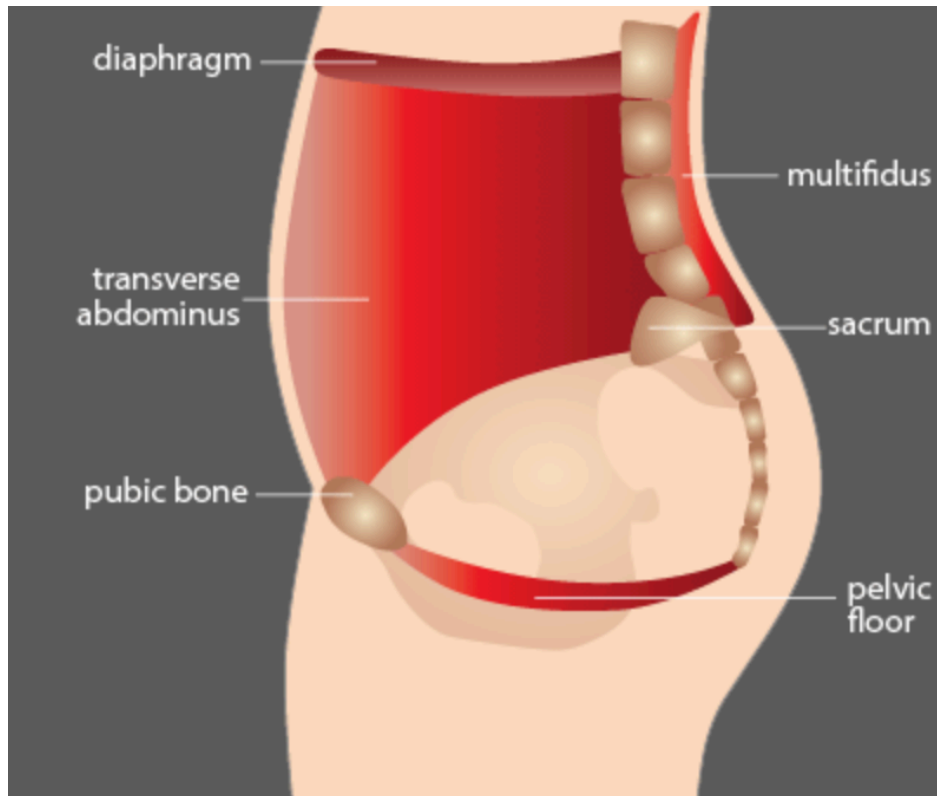


Your Core Muscles

You have probably heard the term “core muscles” – these include your deep abdominal muscles called Transversus Abdominus (they act like a corset), the pelvic floor muscles and the Multifidus.



During pregnancy it is important to keep tone in both the TA and the pelvic floor muscles which support your growing baby.

It is also important to be able to relax your pelvic floor and not over tighten it, otherwise it may be challenging for your baby to stretch the muscle when birthing.

A simple way to practice is to do it with your breath. Sit in one of the following positions:

- On a chair over the corner with feet on the ground and a cushion under you
- Kneeling over a bolster or several firm cushions
- Sitting cross legged on the edge of a pillow to ensure that you don't “tuck” your tailbone under, instead feel the SIT bones (at the bottom of your pelvis)

In all positions aim to have your spine gently lifted and space and openness in the front of your torso.

- Notice your normal breath for a few moments
- Then place your hands on your lower ribcage and gently take your breath there
- Expand to the front, sides and back as you breathe in allowing your belly and pelvic floor to relax
- As you breathe out gently notice any movement of your belly and pelvic floor
- Now place one hand just above the pubic bone and repeat breathing in and breathing out noticing the movement
- Now let's consciously involve the pelvic floor. On your next exhalation lift your pelvic floor up inside (One way to help do this is to imagine picking a blueberry up and lifting it towards your baby!)
- You might notice the area under your hand drawing back towards your spine
- Inhale relax your pelvic floor and your belly
- Repeat 4 or 5 times

You can do this any time during the day. Remember the relaxation and letting go on the inhalation is really important.

If you find any of this difficult please see a Pelvic Floor Physiotherapist.