

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What treatment will be offered as part of this service?**

The first appointment is an hour to allow us to take a detailed subjective history, and objective assessment. From this, treatment will very much be related to your goals and what you want to achieve. Whether this is to be able to walk pain free pushing the pram, jump on a trampoline, or to be able to run a 5km or marathon. Common treatments we may use are: soft tissue massage techniques, mobilisations, exercise programs tailored specifically for you, Pilates based exercise, functional fitness, hydrotherapy pool, and gym. We have a fully equipped gym which is a friendly welcoming environment and whilst on treatment, clients can use this at no extra cost.

### **What is a subjective and objective assessment?**

A subjective assessment will discuss what the main problem is that you are having, any history related to this, childbirth if relevant, post-natal care if appropriate, any medications and medical history, and discuss your social history such as who's at home with you, help you have with childcare, do you drive, are you working, breastfeeding, are you sleeping? All of this is important to discuss as we work on a whole person approach to treatment and any of these areas may affect your treatment or outcome.

An objective assessment is basically all the tests we would do. We would look at posture, movement of the affected area in particular, usually the lumbopelvic region. We would assess diastasis (abdominal muscle separation) if present, functional testing, range of movement joint testing, and strength testing. We would then piece all this together with subjective findings to formulate a diagnosis, and then put a treatment plan in place.

### **Are you a pelvic health physiotherapist?**

I am a Musculoskeletal physiotherapist with over 20-years' experience and have developed a special interest in working with and treating females and female athletes. If, as part of your care plan, we felt this was required, we would refer and work with them as part of a team.

### **What if I start treatment and then don't have time to do the exercises?**

This sometimes happens as life does often get in the way! We are all busy and especially when we have children too and working and family life it can all get too much. We will try to make your program as accessible and as simple to fit into your day as possible. For example, I won't give you a gym program if you hate the gym and have no time to attend! I will always tailor your program to you. However, sometimes it is simply just not the right time to address these issues and having a break and returning a little later can help.

### **Is this a 'women's health' appointment?**

Traditionally a 'women's health' appointment is related to having a more internal examination. This appointment does not include an internal assessment. It is a one-hour physiotherapy appointment that will discuss what your main issues are, your goals, past medical history, and take a detailed history. This will be followed by an in-depth assessment including posture, scar tissue, range of movement (ROM), specific tests, and strength and function. Then we will together formulate a treatment plan related to your goals.

### **We are planning on trying for a baby in the very near future, I have some low back issues after having my son who is 2 years old, is it worth coming in or wait?**

I would advise coming in to be assessed so you can address some of these issues, so you feel better and stronger going into your second pregnancy. The stronger you are the more in control you will feel.

**Will I have access to the gym during my treatment?**

If we have developed a gym program with you and you are on treatment with us you can use our gym for free, which encourages you to have some time for yourself (if possible) and come and work on your treatment plan.

**Will I be offered an internal examination?**

No, we do not offer internal examinations. If we felt this was necessary as part of your care plan, we would recommend and refer you onward to colleagues who are trained in this area.

**I've not had any children, is this appointment suitable for me?**

Even if you have not had a baby and are suffering from some urinary leakage when running, or if you want to condition your body. Or if you are commencing the peri menopause chapter of your life and want to address fitness then this would be ideal as it gives us time to sit and discuss all aspects that this phase of life throws at us!

**My child is 7, is this appointment suitable for me?**

Absolutely! It doesn't matter what age your child is, 7 or 27 years. You are always post-natal if you've had a baby and we want to get you as fit and strong as you want and need to be.

**I have some incontinence but feel uncomfortable talking about it, and Low Back Pain (LBP), is this appointment for me?**

We will discuss what you feel comfortable talking about and sometimes people don't discuss things in their first session and only feel more comfortable as time goes on and that's fine. It's whatever you feel comfortable with. The more information we have initially really helps paint a better overall picture of what is going on, but this is absolutely at your pace, and I totally understand this. We talk about this stuff all the time so it's normal for us however, I appreciate that it can be uncomfortable for some. Prior to attending your appointment you will receive a confirmation e-mail with a few questions which you can fill in details of anything you struggle to discuss if that's easier for you. There is a strong link between LBP and incontinence so any information we have is very helpful to create the best treatment plan for you.

**I leak when I run, is this appointment for me?**

The key here is finding out why you leak when you run. We would ask a series of questions to assist us with this and if we feel you required a more internal examination, we will signpost you on for further investigations. However, we would also address everything else such as abdominal strength as if there is an issue with pelvic floor it can affect the rest of the core cylinder of stability. We can work alongside this to help improve strength and function.

**I'm pregnant and have LBP is this for me?**

Yes, we are happy to assess you if you are pregnant and having issues during pregnancy. We would always work within our scope of practice and liaise with your midwife as required.

**Louise Mitchell  
Senior Physiotherapist**