

## **Pelvic Floor Urostym Program**

**What is the Pelvic Floor?** The pelvic floor is a set of muscles that spread across the bottom of the pelvic cavity like a hammock or basket of muscles. The pelvic floor has three openings that run through it, the urethra, the vagina, and the rectum. The functions of the pelvic floor include:

- Supporting pelvic organs, specifically the uterus, bladder, and rectum
- Assist in sphincter control for the bladder and bowel function
- Withstand increases in pressure that occur in the abdomen, such as coughing, sneezing, laughing, straining, and lifting so as to prevent leakage of urine or stool during these activities.
- Enhance the sexual response
- Steady the hips, lumbar spine, sacrum and the pelvis

## **What are the Consequences of a Weak Pelvic Floor?**

When a woman ages or after childbirth, the pelvic floor muscles may begin to sag and weaken as a result of stress placed on them. Many conditions can stress the pelvic floor including:

- Pregnancy & childbirth
- Chronic constipation
- Repetitive straining due to heavy lifting, coughing
- Weakened pelvic floor muscles over time can lead to pelvic organ prolapse, or the falling of a uterus, bladder or rectum into the vaginal canal
- The most common symptoms of a weak pelvic floor are involuntary leakage of urine or stool (urinary and fecal incontinence)

## **Did you Know?**

- Urinary incontinence affects approximately 20 million people in the United States
- Incontinence and overactive bladder are not just problems for older adults. Young women, athletes participating in high impact sports and postpartum women can all be affected
- 60-85% of women with low pelvic tone symptoms reported improvement of often complete resolution of incontinence after 8 weeks of pelvic rehab treatments.

- Approximately 30% of women report improved sexual function following pelvic floor rehab
- Pelvic floor strength has been correlated to orgasm, excitement, lubrication and overall sexual satisfaction.
- Anterior pelvic prolapse can be improved by an entire grade with pelvic floor rehab series of treatment.

### **Symptoms UroStym Program Treats:**

- Stress Urinary Incontinence
- Urge Incontinence
- Mixed Incontinence (both stress and urge)
- Fecal Incontinence
- Pelvic Organ Prolapse
- Urinary Urge & Frequency
- Nighttime Urination

### **UroStym 8 week Treatment Program Includes:**

- Pelvic floor strength training for incontinence and prolapse: daily, short exercises are recommended throughout 8 week program
- Biofeedback for urgency and dysfunctional voiding is conducted
- Gentle and painless muscle electrical stimulation is conducted through a small vaginal probe to assist in muscle re-education and strengthening. By using the e-stimulation it helps our nerves and muscles respond to therapy quicker.
- Bladder training for urgency and overactive bladder
- Vaginal estrogen therapy & medication management for appropriate candidates
- Dietary modification to avoid bladder irritants
- Resources for weight loss to alleviate incontinence

### **Understanding Pelvic Floor Exercise Therapy:**

UroStym is administered by Dr. Serena who is a physician, not a pelvic floor physical therapist. UroStym is a program that uses a computer recorder that monitors the strength of your pelvic muscles and your progress throughout the therapy. This computerized technology allows you to immediately see the results as you contract and relax the correct group of muscles according to a preset pattern of exercises. Think of this as your personal trainer while you “do a circuit” of exercises just as they do for other muscles in the fitness centers. UroStym program is a complementary therapy to pelvic



floor physical therapy. Women who have high tone pelvic tightness in their pelvic floor should not undergo UroStym treatment, as this is designed for women with low tone pelvic floor weakness only.

**Preparation for UroStym Office Visit:** UroStym treatments are administered in an office setting. For your comfort you are asked to void prior to your visits. Menstruation is not a contraindication to physical therapy.

### **What to Expect from Each Visit:**

- ❑ Each treatment is divided into two portions. During the first portion of the treatment several sensors are utilized to assess muscle function. A small sensor is placed in the rectum and the vagina. You will be asked to tighten these muscles. The muscle testing is important because no two people are exactly alike. The level of exercises we recommend will be based on the muscle testing. If too many exercises are performed it may actually fatigue the muscle. If not enough are performed the muscle will not improve.
- ❑ During the second portion the same vaginal sensor utilized to assess muscle function is activated to stimulate the muscle. You will feel a gentle tapping sensation and feel the muscle contract. This is not uncomfortable for most women. This is the same type of therapy used for other muscles in the body to help them get stronger faster.

**What to expect afterwards?** Approximately 85% of the patients we see will attain significant improvement or cure with this type of therapy alone. As with any form of treatment there are some patients who do not benefit from non-surgical therapy. Change in your symptoms should be noticed in 3-4 visits if non-surgical therapy is going to be successful for you. This does not mean you will be cured in 3-4 visits but you should notice gradual progress. Remember loss of bladder control did not just occur overnight. We are working with the same muscles that have become weak so success does take some time and most importantly it requires specific exercises and recommendations be followed.

**Will Insurance Cover This Treatment?** Most insurance will cover the 8 week course of UroStym therapy. Prior authorization will be submitted before you begin treatment to best estimate coverage for your plan.