



# PELVIC GIRDLE PAIN TOP TIPS

Ways to help you avoid getting, or  
best manage, your pelvic girdle pain.

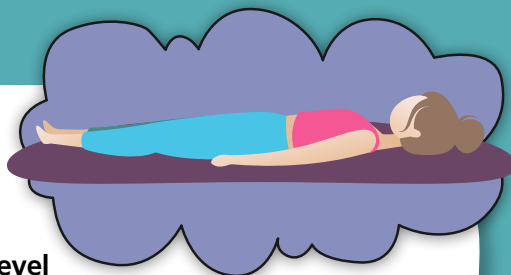
## TOP TIP #1

### Use your breath.

How you breathe affects your body's stress response and can influence the level of pain you feel. You want to aim to belly breathe. Here's how to do it:

- You can breathe in any position but lying down is easiest.
- Relax your belly and shoulders.
- Try and breathe through your nose if possible.
- Have one hand on your belly and the other on your chest.
- Breathe in slowly 'sipping' air through your nose and picture your belly filling with air. Your hand on your belly will move outwards slightly (inflate) and your hand on your chest should stay still.
- Breathe out through your nose, feel your belly softly move back inwards.

Don't worry if it's tricky at first, try for 2 or 3 breaths, relax back to your normal breathing and try little and often during the day.



## What do we mean by PGP?

Pelvic Girdle Pain (PGP) is the name given to pain anywhere from the lower back down to the thighs, at the front, side or back of the body. It includes pubic pain called Symphysis Pubis Dysfunction (SPD). Pain can vary from a mild ache to severe pain and can start at any point during pregnancy, labour or after birth. It can affect daily life, mental health and wellbeing.

Please use the following top tips to help you avoid getting or best manage your pelvic girdle pain. If you are reading this as a printed copy, where you see website links you can access them through your MyPathway resource folder or type the name of the resource into google.

## TOP TIP #2

### Variety of movement and postures.

- The body needs variety of movement to keep it happy.
- There is no ideal posture but as a general rule, 'the best posture is your next posture.'
- Notice how long you are happy/comfortable in any one position before getting uncomfortable/increase in pain. Plan to move before this point, fidget!
- If you have pain on specific movements, try tweaking them, e.g. lift your bum when you turn in bed, sit on a plastic bag to get in/out of a car, go sideways up stairs.

For longer term pain, this resource can be helpful:  
**The Pain Toolkit:** <https://tinyurl.com/4myr9sr9>



### TOP TIP #3

#### Pace yourself.

Pace activity and have some rest breaks to avoid getting to the point where you are very uncomfortable/your pain has flared.

This can take some effort and practise to get used to.

These resources can help you get started:

- 1 <https://livewellwithpain.co.uk/ten-footsteps-programme/>
- 2 [www.rcot.co.uk/conserving-energy](http://www.rcot.co.uk/conserving-energy)

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### TOP TIP #4

#### Mindfulness or meditation.

- Mindfulness is paying more attention to the present moment.
- Focusing on the breath is one form of mindfulness but there are lots of different styles.
- The best way to get success is to explore the different styles to find the right fit for you.
- A good mindfulness practise should be quick and easy to do in the moment and practised regularly throughout your day to see the benefits.

This resource can help you get started:  
[www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/tips-and-support/mindfulness/](http://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/tips-and-support/mindfulness/)



### TOP TIP #5

#### Thoughts, feelings and beliefs.

- Check in with your thoughts regularly during the day.
- Growing up, how your family responded to pain will have shaped how you respond to pain and/or stress now.
- Having a baby is a time of lots of change. Talk about this with your partner, wider family or friends.
- Try journaling on your phone or in a notepad.
- Ask for support from healthcare professionals.
- Unfollow anyone or pages on social media that don't make you feel good.
- Try mindfulness and/or hypnosis Apps.



### TOP TIP #6

#### How to manage stress.

How we manage stress can make a big difference to our mental wellbeing and it's important to understand how it affects you and why.

These are some healthy habits to help with stress:

- Have a note pad by your bedside to write down any thoughts/feelings.
- Check in with your breathing regularly through the day.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Talk to someone you trust – it can help lighten the load.

These resources can help you get started:

- 1 Stress bucket – <https://tinyurl.com/47m2e7ra>
- 2 NHS resources – <https://tinyurl.com/5n82npz4>
- 3 [www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-health-issues/stress/](http://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-health-issues/stress/)



## TOP TIP #7

### Create and stick to a regular pelvic floor exercise routine.

Making time to do your pelvic floor exercises every day is the best way to keep your pelvic floor healthy. And it is easier than you think!

**Did you know you can do these at any time, in any position?**

For more information:

[https://thepogp.co.uk/patients/pelvic\\_health\\_advice/pelvic\\_floor\\_muscles.aspx](https://thepogp.co.uk/patients/pelvic_health_advice/pelvic_floor_muscles.aspx)



## TOP TIP #8

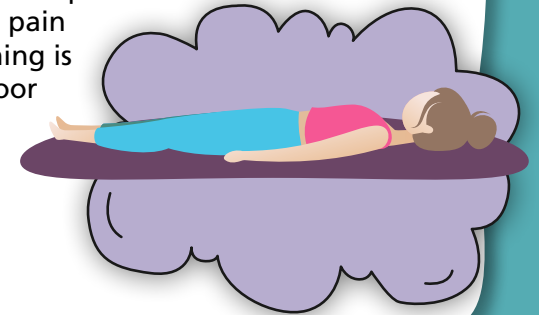
### Learn to relax your pelvic floor.

It is very important to be able to fully relax your pelvic floor muscles as well as being able to contract them.

If these muscles are too tight it can cause problems like bladder pain, leaking wee and pain during sex. Using your belly breathing is a great way to allow your pelvic floor muscles to relax.

For more ways to help, visit:

<https://squeezezyapp.com/what-if-i-have-pelvic-pain-2/>



## TOP TIP #9

### All movement counts!

Movement and exercise are beneficial for long-term mind and body health.

Try movement snacking! 10-minute chunks of movement all add up, e.g., dancing round your kitchen, short walk/run, get off the bus early. Aim to achieve 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week. Meaning, your heart rate will be raised but you can still talk.

The body needs variety of movement to help to keep it happy. These resources can help guide you:

[www.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/exercise-physical-activity](http://www.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/exercise-physical-activity)

[www.activepregnancyfoundation.org/findyouractive](http://www.activepregnancyfoundation.org/findyouractive)



## WE CAN GIVE YOU THE HELP AND SUPPORT YOU NEED

If you are pregnant or postnatal (up to 12 months after pregnancy), and having pelvic health issues, you don't have to 'just live with it'. Whether your symptoms can be managed at home (using online self-help tools), or you need specialist treatment, we can give help and support.

Visit [www.blackcountry0-18.nhs.uk/pregnant-women/staying-healthy-pregnancy/perinatal-pelvic-health-service](http://www.blackcountry0-18.nhs.uk/pregnant-women/staying-healthy-pregnancy/perinatal-pelvic-health-service) or talk to your midwife.

