

# FACT SHEET

## Prolapse

Prolapse is what happens when your pelvic organs (bladder, uterus or bowel) descend/drop/bulge down into the pelvic cavity, usually into the vaginal walls. This usually occurs as a result of excessive or prolonged pressure into the pelvic cavity.

### Risk factors

- > Pregnancy
- > Vaginal delivery
- > Chronic constipation and straining on the toilet
- > Chronic coughing/sneezing
- > Repeated heavy lifting

Prolapse affects 1 in 2 women who have ever had a baby. Not everyone will be aware that they have a prolapse, so it is worthwhile being checked by your women's health physiotherapist if you are unsure. If you are unsure, look out for these typical symptoms.



### Symptoms that may indicate a prolapse

- > Vaginal pressure/heaviness/bulging/dragging
- > Incontinence
- > Incomplete bladder or bowel emptying
- > Painful sex or reduced sensations during intercourse
- > Urinary tract infections

### Treatment

- > Pelvic floor strengthening
- > General muscular conditioning and postural correction
- > Bladder retraining
- > Bowel retraining
- > Possible use of a vaginal support pessary

Prolapse symptoms indicate that there is a weakness in the pelvic ligaments and possibly the pelvic floor. These symptoms can lead to issues with bladder and bowel control, so it is always important to get this investigated sooner rather than later!