

RESTORING YOUR BALANCE, LLC

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WOMEN'S HEALTH PHYSICAL THERAPY

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How do I approach my Doctor regarding such personal issues?

Discussing issues of pain with intimacy, incontinence, etc, can be very difficult and embarrassing, especially if you feel you are the only one with these symptoms, but it is very important to tell your physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant anything about your body and health that does not seem normal to you (remember: pain is never normal and you can't get help or direction until you tell your provider).

Suggestions:

1. Always be completely honest even if you feel embarrassed. These topics are a normal part of life (sexual relations, bowel, and bladder function) Remember: just because your provider does not ask you about these things does not mean it is not important. It is up to you!!
2. Compare the symptoms now to when you felt more "normal". Explain how it affects everyday life physically, socially, and relationally.
3. Be specific. Tell as much as you can about your symptoms when they occur, how long they last, what makes them better or worse, when did they start and things that increase or decrease symptoms.
4. Ask about all the options. Some physicians may highly recommend medications as a first line of defense. Keep in mind there are always side effects. Physical Therapy is always a safe, conservative alternative and first step. An evaluation with a Women's Health PT can determine some treatment options that may be available. PT does not limit future options such as medications or surgery if these become necessary. Your PT will also give evaluation findings to your provider and discuss any necessary findings. So a team approach is encouraged.
5. Talk to the provider you are most comfortable with in the office you go to. For example: maybe your physician is a male, but the nurse is female, you may be more comfortable with telling the nurse then she can relay that to the doctor.

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