IMPACT PHYSICAL THERAPY
SPORTS RECOVERY

Women's Health Month Tips

- **Bladder Issues?** Avoid bladder irritants such as alcohol, coffee, black tea & carbonated drinks. They can make you have more urgency, frequency and leakage. Some women find spicy foods, chocolate, dairy, tomatoes and citrus can irritate their bladders. Try eliminating a potential irritant for a few days and see if there is a change in your bladder's behavior.
- **Am I Properly Hydrated?** Make sure you are drinking enough water. How do you know? Your urine should be just about clear.
- **Constipation?** Increase fluid and fiber in your diet and try to add gentle physical activity, such as walking, to your daily routine.
- **What is DRAM?** Diastasis Rectus Abdominus Muscles (DRAM) refers to a partial separation of a woman's stomach muscles during pregnancy. It occurs in many women during the last weeks of pregnancy, and for most women, it will resolve by eight weeks post -partum. For some women, however, the muscles do not automatically come back together and you may need instruction on re-training this muscle group. Our physical therapists can check for DRAM – painlessly and quickly!
- **Post Pregnancy Pelvic Floor Strengthening?** Pelvic floor strengthening postpartum is generally recommended, however this should be under the guidance of a physical therapist as not all women should start with strengthening. Many women have too much baseline tension postpartum, and should NOT be strengthening the pelvic floor or doing Kegels as this may exacerbate urinary incontinence or pelvic organ prolapse.
- **Scar Massage after a C-Section?** *Indirect scar mobilization* can begin day 1 postpartum. It is very important that you do not begin *direct scar massage* without approval from your doctor. Indirect mobilization can include a light touch or brushing, beginning several inches above the incision site as well as 360-diaphragmatic breathing, among other techniques. Over the course of the first 6-8 weeks, you gradually work your way further down to the scar for direct scar massage (with clearance from a physician). How can scar massage help? As the tissues in your abdomen heal after surgery, they may become 'stuck' to each other, or to other structures in the pelvis. Some women may develop issues with their bladder or low back pain because of scar tissue adhesions. Scar massage is an easy technique that may prevent this.

If you are experiencing any dysfunction or have additional questions, schedule a pelvic health consultation to meet with a licensed pelvic health specialist to discuss a plan of action.