



## Talking With Your Doctor

### Helpful Tips for Starting Talks about Pelvic Floor Disorders

It can be difficult to talk about problems such as incontinence or vaginal bulges, even with a doctor. But doctors are used to talking about these problems, and it's worth asking about your symptoms because they can be treated. Your doctor may refer you to a urogynecologist – an expert in treating these problems – if your doctor thinks a specialist can help. Here are some tips to get the conversation started.

#### What should I tell my doctor?

1. My last pelvic exam was \_\_\_\_\_ (days, weeks, months, years) ago.
2. I have \_\_\_\_\_ child(ren) and delivered \_\_\_\_\_ (vaginally/by cesarean section).
3. I'm having some or all of the following symptoms:
  - Pain, pressure or a bulge "down there"
  - Trouble urinating or passing a bowel movement
  - "Leaking" or needing to use the bathroom often
  - Pain during urination
4. My symptoms started \_\_\_\_\_ (days, weeks, months, years) ago.
5. I have these symptoms \_\_\_\_\_ (daily, a few times a week, sometimes, etc.).
6. I want to find ways to treat or cure these symptoms.

*Also, be sure to tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking and any allergies you may have.*

## What should I ask my doctor?

1. Do you think I have symptoms of a pelvic floor disorder?
  - If so, what kind of pelvic floor disorder(s) do I have?
2. What is causing my symptoms?
3. Will my symptoms get better?
4. What can I do to lessen or end these symptoms?
5. Do you see a lot of other patients like me?
6. Do you know of any doctors who specialize in treating my symptoms, such as urogynecologists?
  - If so, can you refer me to someone you would recommend?
7. Will you work with the specialist to make sure he or she knows about my medical history?
8. Can I contact you again to ask your advice after seeing a specialist?
9. What should I do next?
10. If I think of more questions later, can I call or e-mail you?