

## Contact Details

Women's Health Physiotherapist

Phone 9784 8400

Frankston Hospital Physiotherapy (general)

Phone 9784 7660

## Phone Apps

The Pregnancy Pelvic Floor Plan

Pelvic Floor First

[peninsulahealth.org.au](http://peninsulahealth.org.au)



Print Code: 17206 – April 2021  
Authorising Department: Physiotherapy

Disclaimer: The information contained in the brochure is intended to support, not replace, discussion with your doctor or health care professionals.

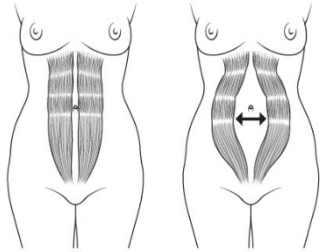
# Care of your stretched abdominal muscles and back after pregnancy

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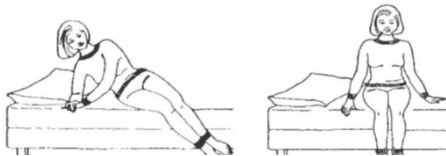
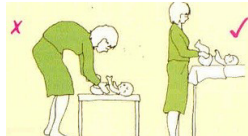
## Separation of the tummy muscles

Separation of the tummy muscles, or DRAM – diastasis of the rectus abdominis muscles, can occur during and after pregnancy. It occurs when the connective tissue, which joins the muscles together, widens to allow room for the growing baby. Most women will have some separation towards the end of their pregnancy. In many cases, the separation will decrease back to a normal gap within the first few weeks after delivery.



## Caring for your DRAM in the first few weeks

- Wear high fitting tummy support garments e.g. Tubi-grip or high firm fitting underwear or singlet
- Be mindful of your posture. For example, during breastfeeding, during nappy changes or and when bathing your baby
- Roll to your side when getting in and out of bed



## Management of your separation

Whether it is a small or large separation, management **starts** with your pelvic floor. You should feel your deep tummy muscles tighten when you do your pelvic floor exercises. Refer to the 'Care for your pelvic floor after pregnancy' handout for details on pelvic floor exercises.

## Exercises

### Abdominal exercises – Pelvic Tilts

- On your back as shown



- Draw lower tummy in
- Gently roll your pelvis as if you are “tucking a tail between your legs”
- Let go, relax and repeat x 10
- Repeat pelvic tilts on all fours



### General exercises – Walking

At 2-3 weeks post birth you can start walking. Start with 10-15 minutes and gradually increase. This is not only good for your general health; it will also exercise your tummy muscles.

## When to seek help

Speak to your physiotherapist if you are experiencing ongoing back or pelvic pain, have incontinence, or experiencing heaviness in your pelvic floor. If in a month you are still worried about your tummy muscles, please contact the women's health physiotherapy team.