

WOMEN'S HEALTH

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What work do you do and why did you choose this field?

I am a physiotherapist with a special interest in Women's Health. I treat women with bowel, bladder and sexual dysfunctions as well as children with bowel and bladder dysfunction. I treat women at all stages of life including pregnancy, post-partum, pre and post menopause. The majority of the patients I see have incontinence, pelvic pain or pelvic floor dysfunction. I am also a lactation consultant and help new moms with breastfeeding challenges.

I chose this field because of the great need to help women with these often embarrassing and overlooked issues. I feel privileged to be able to do the work that I do and have such a powerful impact on women's lives.

Why is it important for women to practice self-care?

Women are naturally caregivers and often put the needs of others before

themselves. I see many women who have neglected their own physical or mental health while looking after everyone around them. Neglecting self-care can lead to burnout and a variety of physical and psychological issues. As a women's health physio, I see the impact that stress and burnout can have on a woman's body. The pelvis is the centre of emotion in the body and stress and/or anxiety can contribute to or exacerbate existing pelvic floor symptoms.

I always remind my patients that you can't pour from an empty cup!

What small practices or actions can women take today to protect their health?

One of the most important things I educate women about is knowing the difference between what is common and what is normal. 1 in 3 women have pelvic floor dysfunction so while it is common, it is not normal and can be treated. No one should have to suffer

unnecessarily because they have been told that it is a consequence of having children or ageing, or because all their friends have it so it must be normal. Often just small changes can make a huge difference. Trust your intuition and if something doesn't feel right, seek help, and keep looking if you don't get the answers you need straight away.

As mentioned above, self-care is so important. Breathing exercises, walks, meditation or even just taking time out to enjoy a cup of tea can really decrease stress levels and improve one's state of mind - especially in these stressful times we are living in.

What Jewish woman (past or present) inspires you and why?

My late mother Ros was a woman of incredible kindness. She always went out of her way to help people and always treated people with kindness and empathy. Years after her death whenever I met people who knew her, even briefly, they remember how she treated them.

I try and practice this in my life daily and have instilled these values in my own children. My ideal is to ensure that every woman who walks through the doors of my practice leaves feeling better than she did when she walked in, both physically and emotionally. In our crazy world which can often be harsh and cruel, a little bit of kindness can go a long way.

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