

Levator Ani Syndrome

What is Levator Ani Syndrome?

Levator Ani Syndrome results from spasm in the pelvic floor muscles. It is often caused by trauma in or around the pelvis, abdomen or back. Weak muscles can also spasm.

Determining Whether You Have Levator Ani Syndrome

There are no laboratory tests for this condition. Levator Ani Syndrome is a collection of symptoms and findings. Not all patients have all the symptoms. Only your doctor can diagnose Levator Ani Syndrome. The most common symptoms include:

- Deep dull aching in the rectum/vagina
- Referred pain to the thigh and buttock
- Sensation of “sitting on a ball.” Pain is worse in sitting and with bowel movement.
- Spasms and pain in the pelvic floor muscle
- Pain during or after intercourse
- Tests usually show there is no inflammatory bowel disease, infection, ulcers or other bowel problem.

Treatments

- Medications to decrease muscle spasm and pain.
- Biofeedback to learn how to relax and contract the pelvic floor muscles properly.
- Electrical stimulation to the pelvic floor muscles can relax these muscles and increase circulation and promote healing.
- TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) electrical stimulation to the pelvic floor nerves in the lower spine may help to “cover up” the pain and to relax the muscles.
- Physical therapy to treat spasm in the buttock muscles or problems in the sacroiliac joint.
- Heat and ultrasound can be used by physical therapists to relax the pelvic floor muscles.
- A special form of rectal and buttock massage can be performed by the doctor or therapist to decrease pain and spasm.