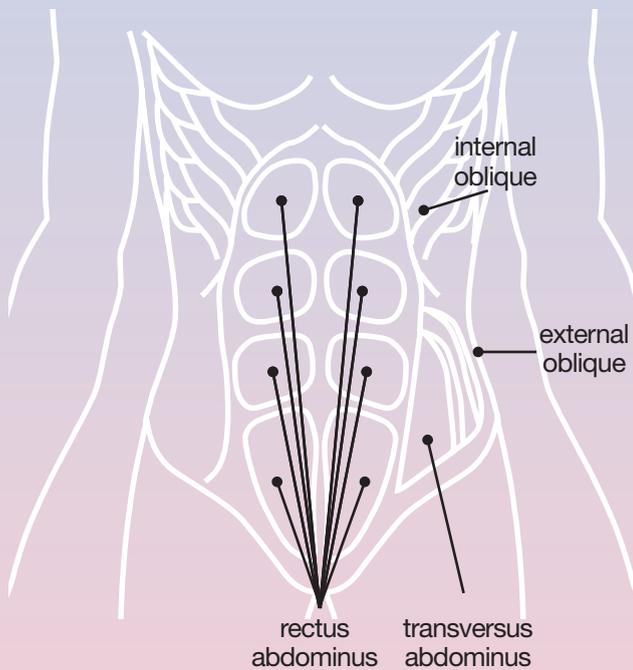


- Begin to gently contract your pelvic floor muscles and deep abdominal muscles (transverse abdominals). You should not have discomfort when you use these muscles gently. Slowly increase the number of contractions and start by holding each one for up to 5 seconds (10 seconds is your goal). See your physiotherapist to ensure you are doing these correctly.
- Stretch your back, buttocks and shoulders to help relieve soreness.
- Rest is just as important as exercise at this stage so allow yourself time to adjust and take time to listen to your body!



These sessions can be booked without a referral from your Doctor, but only after your six week postnatal check.

To book an Initial Assessment or to find out more information, please contact SB Sports Injury and Physiotherapy clinic on the telephone number below.



# Your Body After Your Baby



Tara Skillicorn has been a qualified Physiotherapist for 15 years specialising in musculoskeletal physiotherapy. As a mother to three young children she is a strong advocate for getting back into shape after having your baby. She has undertaken postgraduate training in the field and is keen to help new mothers regain their pre-pregnancy shape and body confidence. She is also a qualified pilates practitioner.



## SB Sports Injury & Physiotherapy Clinic

Broadway, Shifnal, Shropshire TF11 8AZ

Phone: 01952 462330

Mobile: 07788725487

[www.shropshirephysio.co.uk](http://www.shropshirephysio.co.uk)

## Things to consider after having your baby

Physiotherapy can support you in your return to everyday activities and exercise.

## Self Assessment

Have you been told you have a split of your abdominal muscles as a consequence of your pregnancy?

Pregnancy can cause expansion of the abdominal wall and while most accommodate this challenge, some can be damaged and would benefit from a physiotherapy input. Regaining your core muscles and correcting muscle imbalance is vital before starting a new exercise regime.

**Try these quick tests.....**

### 1. CURL UP TEST

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Slowly lift your head and shoulders up off the floor keeping your chin tucked in.

### 2. LEG LIFT TEST

Lie on your back with your legs straight. Lift one leg up off the ground about 2 inches.

During each test, check for the following:

- Do you have back or pubic pain?
- Try to feel the borders of the (rectus abdominus) muscles along the middle of your tummy. Is there a 'soft' gap or separation of these muscles?
- Can you see any bulging or doming of your abdomen
- Can you feel your pelvic floor (at the opening of your vagina). Is there descent or bulging out?

If any of the above occurs, it is useful to see a physiotherapist for an assessment of your abdominals. Most ladies after having a baby feel they haven't the strength or tone in their abdominals for quite some time. Regaining your abdominal muscle tone and function is important as they support your spine and are the foundations for a firm tummy. With specialist physiotherapy we aim to get you feeling better as soon as possible, prevent recurrent problems and help you to return to doing the things you enjoy.

## What to Expect From Your Physiotherapist

Your half an hour session will include:

- A detailed assessment, of your abdominals, lumbar spine and pelvis.
- Explain to you their findings and how this may be affecting your function and activities.
- Work with you to develop a treatment programme (manual therapy, education and exercise) that is specific to your needs and ability.
- Devise an exercise programme specific to your goals.

Your physiotherapist will advise you when you are ready to take on more activity and help you to work towards whatever exercise/activities that fit your lifestyle and goals. We can also liaise with local personal trainers with specific post natal exercise training.



## What is Normal?

### 0-8 Weeks After Delivery

- You may feel like your bottom is falling out and not know how you should be standing or sitting.
- You may experience pain in your back, hips or pubic area.
- You may have difficulty controlling urine, gas or stool.
- Your neck, arms, back and hips may be sore as you adjust to lifting and feeding your baby.

This is an important stage of healing, allow yourself time to adjust and take the time to listen to your body!

### 8+ Weeks After Delivery

- Your bleeding should have stopped and any incisions/tears should have healed; consult your doctor if you have any concerns.
- You should be pain free.
- You should have control over your bladder and bowel movements.
- You may now begin to increase your activity level and consider returning to your exercise class practice once you have seen your GP for the six week postnatal check.

### What To Do As You Recover From The Birth

- Try not to slouch when sitting, standing, nursing or carrying your baby. Use pillows to support your back and baby. It is important to develop good postural habits now, as good habits can prevent future problem.