

Physiotherapy in the Treatment of Urogynecology

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As a physiotherapist, I am aware of the challenge of developing and strengthening the role of Physiotherapy in the treatment of urogynecology within the multidisciplinary health team.

The dysfunction of the pelvic floor muscles (and, in general, the lumbo-pelvic joint) that can affect the normal biomechanics of the area and the functioning of the organs housed in the lower part of the trunk and especially those that are inside of the pelvis (urinary, digestive and genital systems).

Urinary and fecal incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, constipation, and lumbo-pelvic pain are clinically related signs and have a high incidence in the occidental population (especially in women). These signs may have a very diverse and multifactorial etiology but, as a common sign, there is always a muscular and/or articular dysfunction of the lumbar and/or pelvic region that can benefit from Physiotherapy. This benefit stems from the fact that healing can be achieved more easily (without surgical intervention), less painful, with fewer side effects, faster and, consequently, more economical.

In order to achieve the effective performance of the physiotherapist in this field, it is necessary that the training is adequate: dominating the pathophysiology of genito-urinary dysfunctions. Without this basis in their training, the professional cannot carry out the process of evaluation, diagnosis and specific treatment of a successful way for the patient. As an added, and even more important, is the preventive capacity of all these problems that Physiotherapy has when it provides good advice in population groups more sensitive to develop such problems: women in the postpartum, elderly, patients with genito-urinary cancer after surgery, etc.

In order to strengthen the development of Uro-Gynecological Physiotherapy, it is of great interest to establish a conceptual, theoretical and practical framework of the specialty in Europe. In this way, it is possible to open path in countries, such as Spain, where the specialties of Physiotherapy are not officially defined. If this is achieved, there will be benefits for all participants in the Health System: physiotherapists, other health professionals and, above all, patients.

This strategic action, for one of the fields of action of Physiotherapy with more development in the last decade, such as Gynecology, should also be followed by other specialties of the profession. With this, a new paradigm can be achieved in the work of the physiotherapist through the modernization of the profession, its adaptation to social demands and its strong establishment in academic and research institutions.

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