

Pelvic Floor Perfect Getting Started Guide



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**CORE
EXERCISE
SOLUTIONS**
exercise smarter. not harder.

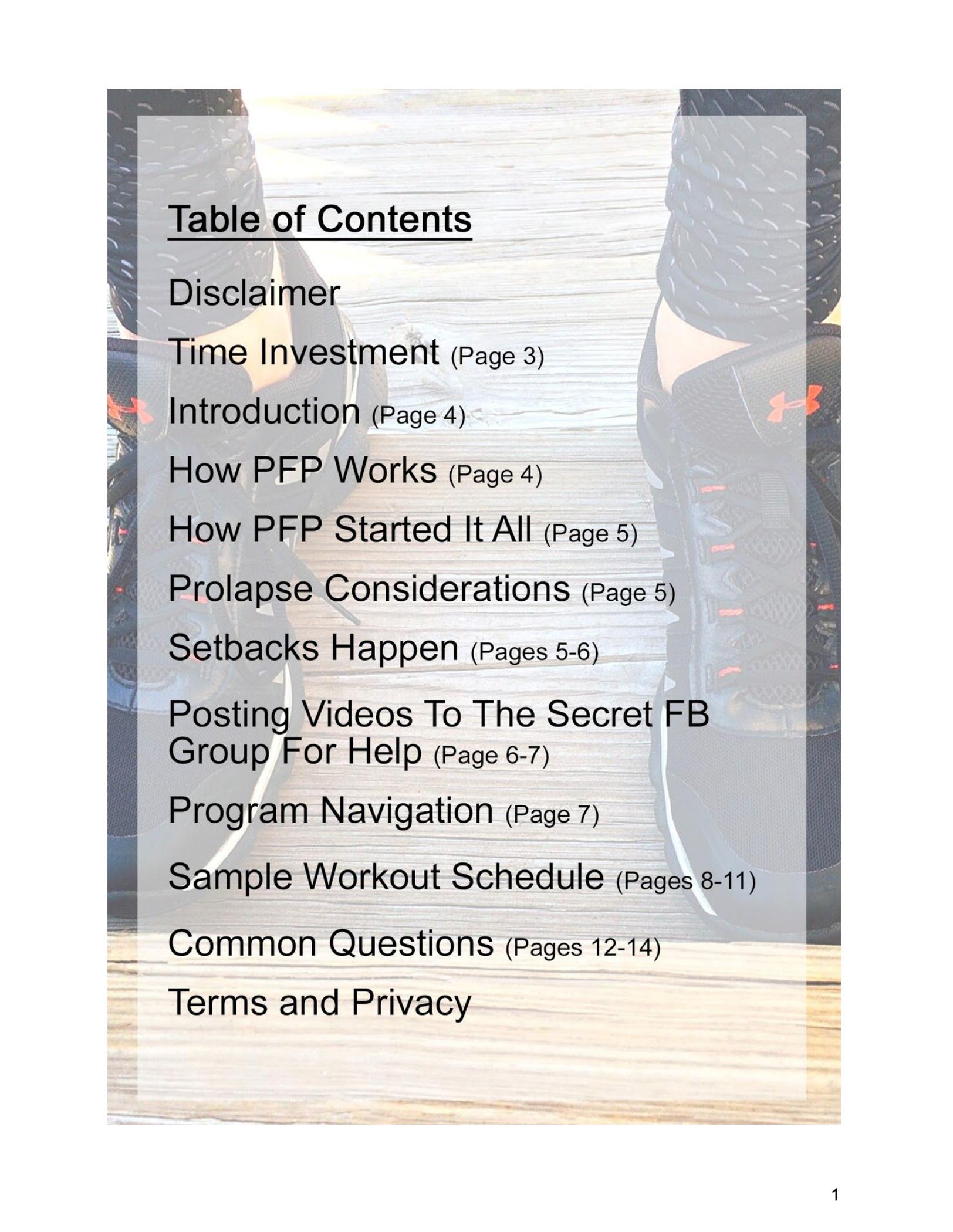


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Welcome! I'm so excited to have you here in this Pelvic Floor Perfect Program with me. This is going to be a journey and it's completely normal to feel overwhelmed or hopeless in the beginning, but I promise if you stick with me, that will pass and you will feel better!

Please take advantage of the 30 day trial to the facebook group and all the other programs. Just email: info@coreexercisesolutions.com to get signed up if you haven't already. I can help you get started on the right foot and modify or adjust your plan as needed. I've done my best to guess how to order the education and exercises, but everyone is different. You may need something modified or need to skip to a different section, so just know it's ok to skip around. There is no one-size-fits-all, especially for rehab!!

There are many helpful tips below, like how to access the PDFs, checklists to help guide your week, and other great questions. Please keep reading through this guide to find those answers.

Disclaimer:

This program is not intended to diagnose or treat any illness or injury. It is for educational purposes only. If you choose to try any of the exercises presented here you do so at your own risk. Please consult your physician before you start any new program. By using this program you agree to not hold Dr. Sarah Duvall or Core Exercise Solutions liable for any illness or injury. Not every exercise is safe for every person. Correct execution of all exercises is imperative to prevent injury. Please consult your healthcare professional if you have questions about exercise execution or if an exercise is right for you.

Time Investment:

At the beginning of each week there is a PDF to follow that goes over the exercises/tasks for the week. It explains exactly what to focus on that week. It is recommended to do this 3 times a week (or more if you have time and want to). The time required each day will vary depending on how long you decide to work on each exercise and how slowly you move through the reps.

If it takes you longer than a week to make it through the weekly assignments that's ok! If you run through faster than it says, great! *The timeline is just a suggestion, you may move faster or slower.* You can take more than 12 weeks to go through the program, so don't feel stressed about not sticking to the "weeks".

Feeling it in the right place matters!!! Doing one rep where you feel it in the right place is 1000% more effective than rushing through to get the reps done. It's not about the reps!! **It's about changing how your body moves.**

You will start incorporating some of the things like posture, breathing and hip hinging into your daily life so you will work on these more often as you move throughout the day. Even if you only get through one or two exercises, that's fine. Life happens. Just try again tomorrow. The fact that you did something today is a step in the right direction and will help you in the long run. There is no right or wrong, the only constant is change and as long as you're consistently moving forward (even if it is just a one-exercise day) then your change will be positive.

If you're not getting something and it just seems impossible, *move on!* Come back to it later once you have worked on other areas and it may not be as hard. The important thing is to keep moving forward in the program and gaining knowledge. You never know what will make that light bulb of understanding go off. It could be in week 10!!

You can do this program from the comfort of your own home. Recommended equipment is minimal and includes resistance and loop bands, a foam roller, and a ball or two for PF release (see "common questions"). Some people like doing the workouts at the gym but there are some parts of the program you will want to do at home ;). Here is a link to the equipment list for all the programs: <http://www.coreexercisolutions.com/equipment-list/>

You can access the program from your computer, tablet, or mobile device. All the videos are housed in an online program called Kajabi. You can use whatever device is convenient for you or switch back and forth. The content is the same but the layout will be slightly different depending on the device (see "program navigation" for more about that).

Introduction:

I began my career as a personal trainer in 1999, went on to get my Master's in Physical Therapy graduating in 2005 and then my Doctorate in 2008. I did my Doctorate project on the Pelvis, so it's always been an area of passion. I worked my way through PT school as a personal trainer, so I've been "exercising professionally" for a long time.

After having my first child, I suffered pelvic floor issues and switched my focus to women's health (previously sports and orthopedic therapy). I started online education after discovering the huge lack of quality information for women suffering from diastasis and pelvic floor issues. My goal is to empower you to take back control of your body so you can feel strong and sexy and don't have to worry about your pelvic floor, aches and pains, or getting hurt while trying to get into the best shape of your life.

I'm not going to fix you. *I'm going to give you the tools to fix yourself, so whether you commit and see this through or quit is completely up to you.*

I know you can do this. YOU just need to know you can do this!

How Pelvic Floor Perfect (PFP) works:

PFP is a 12 week online program of progressive educational and exercise videos designed perfectly to help you gain the most progress quickly. It also includes two extensive bonus sections that cover how the pelvic floor works, troubleshooting, and extras you may need to maximize success. Each video has a PDF download to accompany it for reference. You get lifetime access to the program, so even though it is designed to be 12 weeks, feel free to take longer if needed!

You also get access to a SECRET facebook group to get help and feedback from an incredible team of experts (for one month with the free trial upgrade, or as long as you subscribe to the all access membership). Please email info@coreexercisesolutions.com for more info. Most PF Physical Therapist charge out of pocket and cost in the range of \$200 per visit. This course and group was designed to give you expert advice and save you money!

PFP was created to help fix the signs of pelvic floor dysfunction which include:

- Bladder leaks when you sneeze, cough, or laugh
 - Pain with sex or inserting a tampon
 - Bladder leaks during strenuous activities such as exercise, lifting furniture, or jumping
 - Pressure or heaviness
 - Prolapse
-

How PFP Started It All:

I created PFP after I developed leaking post-birth to my first and then prolapse with my second. I realized the information out there to help women with these issues was greatly lacking. As people worked through the program I was asked many times about related abdominal concerns. PFP was already so extensive that I decided to make a new program to address these, the Diastasis Fix. Next I created Happy Hips to resolve the hip questions I received because getting your glutes working again can be complicated and it takes more than one lesson. Posture Perfect was the result of questions regarding neck, shoulder, and mid-back pain. I am currently working on an injury section for MomFit where I try to pull out specific things (like knee and shoulder pain) and give you a roadmap for fixing them. It is tough because the body is complicated and everyone comes in with a different history and needs. *PFP is the foundation for all the programs, as you need a solid base to be able to build upon.*

Prolapse Considerations:

Please hop over to the bonus section. I have several prolapse-specific videos to get you started. Prolapse is possibly the hardest thing I've ever treated in my career as a physical therapist, but where there is a will there's a way so I need you to bring your determination and commitment to yourself if this is going to work.

There is no such thing as a list of prolapse-safe exercises. Any exercise can be dangerous, and any exercise can be done safely- including running, jumping and heavy lifting! It's all in the execution. That's what you're going to learn here. How to move, breathe and keep your PF safe so you can do ANYTHING you want to do. On that note, sitting at the computer always made my prolapse feel worse than exercise, so be sure to examine all aspects of your life.

Setbacks Happen:

Don't panic! We all have setbacks during recovery. This is totally normal. Setbacks can actually happen as things improve because you're changing how your body is moving and responding, and something new is popping up. If you start leaking out of the blue or you feel your prolapse relapse, don't fret - these things happen. We'll work through it together.

Here are few reasons setbacks might happen, but this is not a complete list:

#1. You're doing too many kegels without relaxing enough and experiencing some new PF tightness.

#2. You gripped down with your upper abs and increased pressure bearing down without realizing it. This can be due to tightness and over gripping the PF or just not enough strength. Either one.

#3. You have a cystocele and it got better. As you improve prolapse it can change the angle of the bladder neck and you can experience new leaking because things are more lined up. The issue was always there, but the prolapse was hiding it. This is actually a win, because it means you're on the right track.

#4. Your abs are getting stronger faster than your PF. This can cause pressure down and your PF needs to get stronger to handle it.

#5. You started some new exercise and you're bearing down without realizing it, so you just need more awareness. You'll probably have to relearn every exercise and how to do it the right way. That's why this program has so many details. We're fixing your PF for the rest of your life!

**Posting videos to the secret Facebook group for help:
(Email info@coreexercisesolutions.com to join.)**

Step # 1: If you know you're going to be posting several exercises over a day or two, please save them and post all the videos together on one post. You can either put them all in together or post them one by one in the comments of a main post. When I view your videos as a group it gives me a much better idea of how your body is moving so I can give you better recommendations. It works like a visit. I'm focused on only you through several exercises. It's awesome to give a clear picture to better help you!! When the posts are scattered, so are my thoughts. ;) (I only want to bring you the best thoughts!)

Step #2: Always tell me where you feel it. This matters 1000% more than what it looks like and goes a long way toward giving me a complete picture. The better picture I get, the better advice you get and the faster you get better!

Step #3: After you work on the suggestions for a week or so and want to check back in to see if it looks better, try to find your original post (easier if all the exercises are grouped together) and post the new video in the comments. That way I can easily see where you were and the progress you've made. (Don't forget to tell me how it feels different from before.) I absolutely love the posts that are a chain of progress. It's so cool to see!

Tips for better quality video:

1. Wear tight clothes or a sports bra, so I can see your body.
2. Put the camera facing away from a window. This will give you the best light.
3. Make sure I can see your whole body. (Like the floor under your back and your feet). I can make it large on my computer screen, so full body is best!

Sample Workout Schedule

Print the checklist at the beginning of each week to keep you on track for the week. There is also a quick reference guide for what is contained in each week and this will help you plan your month (find this with the very first video - "How to be Successful").

Phase 1: Getting Started

30 minutes 5 days per week (Sample Schedule: Please change to fit your life better)

Your path to recovery is unique to you!! Which means, your schedule will look different from everyone else's. You might breeze through things that others have trouble with or really struggle on some areas. That's normal. Be sure to modify and have patience with yourself. When in doubt, ask for help!!

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
1	Off	PFP*	PFP/Walk*	Walk	PFP/ Walk	PFP	Walk
2	Walk*	PFP	PFP/ Walk	Walk	PFP/ Walk	PFP	Walk
3*	Off	PFP	PFP/ Walk	Walk	PFP/ Walk	PFP	Walk
4	Walk	PFP	PFP/ Walk	Walk	PFP/ Walk	PFP	Walk

***PFP** - Watch videos and do homework. Can be broken up during the day. It doesn't have to be done during one big block of time.

***PFP/ Walk**- Short walk, like 10 minutes. Can be done during any part of the day.

***Walk** - 20-30 minutes walk or some other form of exercise you love (Watch PF safe cardio in the bonus section)

***Week 3**- Really dive in and get through week 3 to 4 of the PFP material. The lessons decrease in time and density after this so it will make life easier. We just need you to focus and get through that first month of learning.

Week 4 is where everyone gets frustrated. You've just learned all these new ways to move and breathe but you don't feel like you've mastered it and we haven't done any "fun" exercise yet. Frustrating! No one gets the breathing stuff correct right off the bat, so don't be frustrated with yourself. As you continue on in the program, it will get easier and more natural. The exercises in the next phase will only continue to help you. Please do not quit!!! I know this stuff is hard. That's why pelvic floor issues are so tough to fix, but if you just stick with it, I know you will learn so much.

Phase 2: Moving On

Ready to add in an extra program or exercises? Touch base with me in the FB group and we can figure out what will give you the best results.

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
5	Off/ Walk*	PFP*	Mix*	PFP	Mix	PFP WO + Education*	Walk
6	Off/ Walk	PFP	Mix	PFP	Mix	PFP WO + Education	Walk
7	Off/ Walk	PFP	Mix	PFP	Mix	PFP WO + Education	Walk
8	Off/ Walk	PFP	Mix	PFP	Mix	PFP WO + Education	Walk

***Off/Walk-** Take the day off or enjoy some exercise of your choice, like walking.

***Mix-** This is where you can either do the PFP workout if that's your only focus or start to mix in another program, like the DR Fix, Happy Hips, Posture Perfect, SI fix workout, or MomFit or simply add in a little extra walking.

***PFP WO + Education** - Do your PFP workout but also add in one of the bonus- bonus section education videos. Since these weeks contain less content to get through in the PFP program, it's time to add in more learning. *The more you learn, the more chance you have of being successful.*

Phase 3: Finishing Up

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
9	Off/ Walk	PFP*	Troubleshooting*	PFP/ Mix	Mix	PFP	Walk
10	Off/ Walk	PFP	Troubleshooting	PFP/ Mix	Mix	PFP	Walk
11	Off/ Walk	PFP	Troubleshooting	PFP/ Mix	Mix	PFP	Walk
12	Off/ Walk	PFP	Troubleshooting	PFP/ Mix	Mix	PFP	Walk

*Continue to do PFP workout 3 days per week. You should wrap up the education section within weeks 9 or 10.

***Troubleshooting-** This is your day to play around. Really focus on how your body is moving. Explore different exercises and don't try to get through any specific reps or sets, just focus on how you feel. If you're tight or anxious, this is a good day to add in more release work and/or meditation.

Phase 4: Graduation

Doesn't always mean things are fixed perfectly yet, just means you've made it through the material. You may need additional troubleshooting.

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
13	Off/ Walk	Mix*	PFP*	Mix	PFP	Mix	Walk
14	Off/ Walk	Mix	PFP	Mix	PFP	Mix	Walk
15	Off/ Walk	Mix	PFP	Mix	PFP	Mix	Walk
16	Off/ Walk	Mix	PFP	Mix	PFP	Mix	Walk

*Continue to do your PFP workout 2-3 times per week. **If you feel ready, check out the advanced exercises.** These helped me the most with my prolapse once I got the basics down. They are hard and you have to build a solid base first.

***Mix** - This is where you finish up other programs you were working on. Finish out Happy Hips or Posture Perfect or start MomFit.

Phase 5: Getting Stronger

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
17	Off/ Walk	Momfit A*	Release Work/ yoga/ walk	Momfit B	PFP or Mix or Miniglute	Momfit A	Walk
18	Off/ Walk	Momfit B	Release Work/ yoga/ walk	Momfit A	PFP or Mix or Miniglute	Momfit B	Walk
19	Off/ Walk	Momfit A	Release Work/ yoga/ walk	Momfit B	PFP or Mix or Miniglute	Momfit A	Walk
20	Off/ Walk	Momfit B	Release Work/ yoga/ walk	Momfit A	PFP or Mix or Miniglute	Momfit B	Walk

* **Momfit** - Let's get you stronger!!!

* **Release Work/ Yoga/ Walk** - This is your active recovery day.

* **PFP** (Advanced workouts), **Mix** (Exercises from happy hips or posture perfect), **Miniglute** (Work those glutes more, located in Momfit)

If you can't find 30 minutes 5 days per week to invest in your body:

- Consider asking for help and doing an hour on the weekend so you can get through more in one sitting.
- Shift your schedule so you can get up earlier.
- Watch the videos while unloading the dishwasher so you can save all your exercise time for trying the exercises.
- Workout when you can, even if it's only 3 days per week. You'll have to have more patience and know that seeing positive results will take longer.

See the PDF titled "Workout Calendar and goal setting" that is with the "How to be successful" video for a blank calendar to print for creating your own personal workout schedule. This also includes a breakdown to help with goal setting. Hopefully this makes your journey easier to plan!

Common Questions:

Which exercises are safe for the pelvic floor?

There is no unsafe exercise for your pelvic floor. It all comes down to using the proper execution for an exercise. If you are interested in more exercises beyond PFP please see the beginning workouts of MomFit called "Stronger After Baby". All of these are good exercises even for those just beginning PFP. There is also a PF-safe cardio video located in the bonus section of PFP.

I also have Diastasis Recti, should I focus on that first?

You should focus on your pelvic floor first to get a good handle on how to properly execute exercises and keep everything safe. Many people find working on their pelvic floor helps heal their DR or speeds their recovery because their system is more in balance.

Why don't I have access to the whole program right now?

The program is set up so new weeks open for you every 5 days. It is designed this way to help you from getting too overwhelmed. If you want access to the whole program at once, all you need to do is email info@coreexercisolutions.com and request for the weeks to be opened.

Where can I find balls for pelvic floor release?

You can get softer balls from the kids' sections in stores. You can use tennis balls. You can use release balls for your feet. There are lots to choose from on amazon. The possibilities are endless. Just remember the larger and squishier it is, the easier it will be on your PF, so this is a good place to start. The smaller/harder/knobbiest the ball the more you will feel it, so some people need to save these until later on. You can find the pelvic floor release video in week one of PFP.

I am overwhelmed by the amount of information, what do I do first?

Breathe! A lot of people feel overwhelmed when they are learning something new, this is completely normal. Just pick one or two things to focus on. You don't have to master it all at once! As you feel comfortable with the things you picked to focus on first, you can add in more. Breathing is always a good place to start. Everything builds on everything else so you are always moving in the direction you want! I find that by the end of week 4 people have a good grasp and the overwhelm starts to fade. Just stick with it- consistency wins the race, so just do what you can when you can.

Should/can I do all of the programs at once?

It is best to start with PFP. As you start going through the program you will have questions come up that you can post in the FB group as well as posting videos for form checks. You will get suggestions of things to work on based on what you feel during the exercise. These things may be in other programs, so you would incorporate them into your PFP work as recommended. Eventually you may come to a point that your weakest link is no longer your PF. Then you may need to hop into another program for a time to work that weakest link before coming back to PFP to keep making progress. PFP was the first program I created. Others were created later as the need came about. I often find that those with prolapse will need Happy Hips, but one step at a time.

I am really having a hard time connecting to my PF / I can't tell if I am relaxing or if I am bearing down, what do I do?

I find meditation to be extremely helpful when people are having a hard time connecting or feeling what something is doing. In week 2 of PFP I have a video called "Why meditate?" that goes over all the benefits. The video right after that is a guided meditation which will help you relax and work on connecting to your pelvic floor. Other apps (some free) that many people in the group like are Calm, Headspace, Buddhify and Insight Timer. Connecting to your body through meditation is one of my favorite tools for speeding up PF progress.

If that doesn't work, schedule a session with an in-person pelvic floor PT. It might only take one session for them to help you feel and connect to your PF. Connecting is just kinesthetic awareness. Like how you know you're raising your arm without looking at it. Most of us just haven't spent the time connecting to be aware of what's going on. Once you spend some time working on it, you'll start to know what your PF is doing.

This exercise is impossible, what do I do?

Sometimes the exercises that are impossible are the ones we need the most! But sometimes we also need to move past an impossible exercise and come back to it in a week or two. Continuing to work on other things may just make it click and the next time you try it you will have more success. There are also things you can try that work on your brain-body connection which may help accelerate your success with that exercise. Meditation helps to give us better kinesthetic awareness. Also toward the end of the bonus section of PFP is an interview about the brain with Gloria Johnson with visual drills as well as other drills that can help with difficult exercise because they make them less threatening to your brain.

In 90-90 breathing my back kicks in, how do I stop it?

Pull down on the wall to engage your hamstrings. This puts your back in a disadvantageous position to work so it is usually very helpful. You can also put your head on a pillow. Lastly, you can try foam rolling first to remind the muscles to take a break. You can find a mid-back foam roller release video in the bonus section of PFP.

Should I move on if I'm not getting it?

Yes! Sometimes we need to move on and come back to an exercise later. This allow us to work on other areas and that may be just what we need to get it. If you get frustrated with something just move on for now. There is no harm in moving forward without mastering everything. Getting through at least week 4 lays down the foundation for healing so just keep moving through the program. The weeks are just a suggestion, so if you master something quickly feel free to keep going. I want to you have success and continuing through the program is what will get you that success!

What if the exercises make me feel worse?

That means something is going wrong. Ask me in the facebook group and we can troubleshoot together.

I'm having trouble with a specific exercise but don't want to post to the group yet, what can I do?

Throughout the program there are many troubleshooting videos. These go through a specific exercise and have Sarah pointing out what is going right and what could use improvement. These can be EXTREMELY helpful to watch because you can see all the common issues that come up with each exercise. This will help when you watch your own videos. You will pick up on things quicker and be able to notice the intricacies of the exercises more easily because you have had them pointed out in detail. You can also do a group search and watch others and see Sarah's comments. The more people you see work through something, the easier it is to fix on yourself.

Should I feel my PF relax and contract while breathing?

The level of PF contraction will change based on demand. So for regular breathing in a relaxed position, you're not going to feel much of anything for the inhale (relaxation) or exhale (contraction). If you take big breaths you will feel more because you are filling your abdomen with more pressure, so you will feel the relaxation and contraction more. A forced exhale will get you a bigger PF contraction to meet the demand.

How do I tell if my PF is fully relaxed?

A good analogy is the feeling after you get a back massage. You are not bearing down, you are just fully relaxed. A good way to tell can be to sit cross-legged on a hard surface (wood floor, coffee table) as this lets you feel it better, or you can try reclining in a very comfy position. You just want to have that full rest of your PF without pushing down. It will get better over time as you gain awareness.

Am I supposed to take big deep breaths all throughout the day as well as during exercise?

Your regular breaths are not going to be as big and deep as during exercise/practicing breathing, but they should still go down instead of up into your shoulders.

Terms and Privacy:

You are encouraged to read our [terms](#) which includes our refund policy and will answer any questions about obligations and rights. Our [privacy policy](#) is also available for review as we work hard to protect your information.