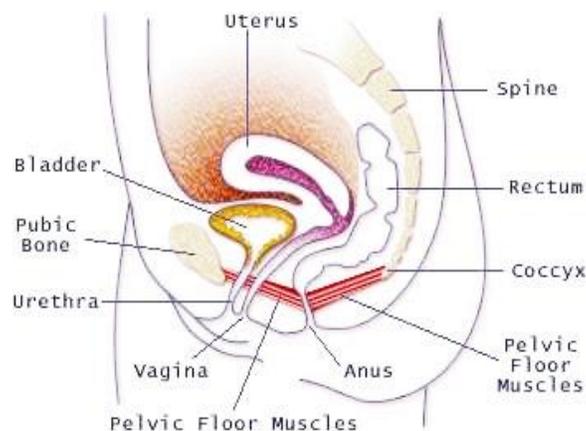


## Physical Therapy for Easier Bowel Movements

Sometimes difficult or incomplete bowel movements, aggravated hemorrhoids, and constipation can be due to dysfunction of the pelvic floor muscles. These are the muscles forming the floor under the pelvic organs, and where the anal sphincter is located. The anal canal exits through the pelvic floor muscles, and is surrounded by the anal sphincter. The role of the anal sphincter is to maintain good closure until you voluntarily relax it to evacuate.



Problems with difficult BM's arise when one or more of the following things happen:

1. The inner pelvic floor muscles are tight and tense, and therefore cannot relax completely to allow for easy or complete evacuation.
2. The pelvic floor muscles actually tighten up more, with attempts to push during evacuation.
3. The pelvic floor muscles are weak and slack, which can change the alignment of the rectum and anal canal, making it difficult to evacuate.

A good bowel movement requires the coordination of these steps:

1. The body giving the signal, or urge for a bowel movement
2. Sitting on the toilet, and relaxing the pelvic floor and anal sphincter muscles
3. Keeping the pelvic muscles relaxed while pushing, so the anal canal can widen and open up for easy passage.

In physical therapy, we are going to help you improve your ability to relax, coordinate and control these muscles in order to feel better.