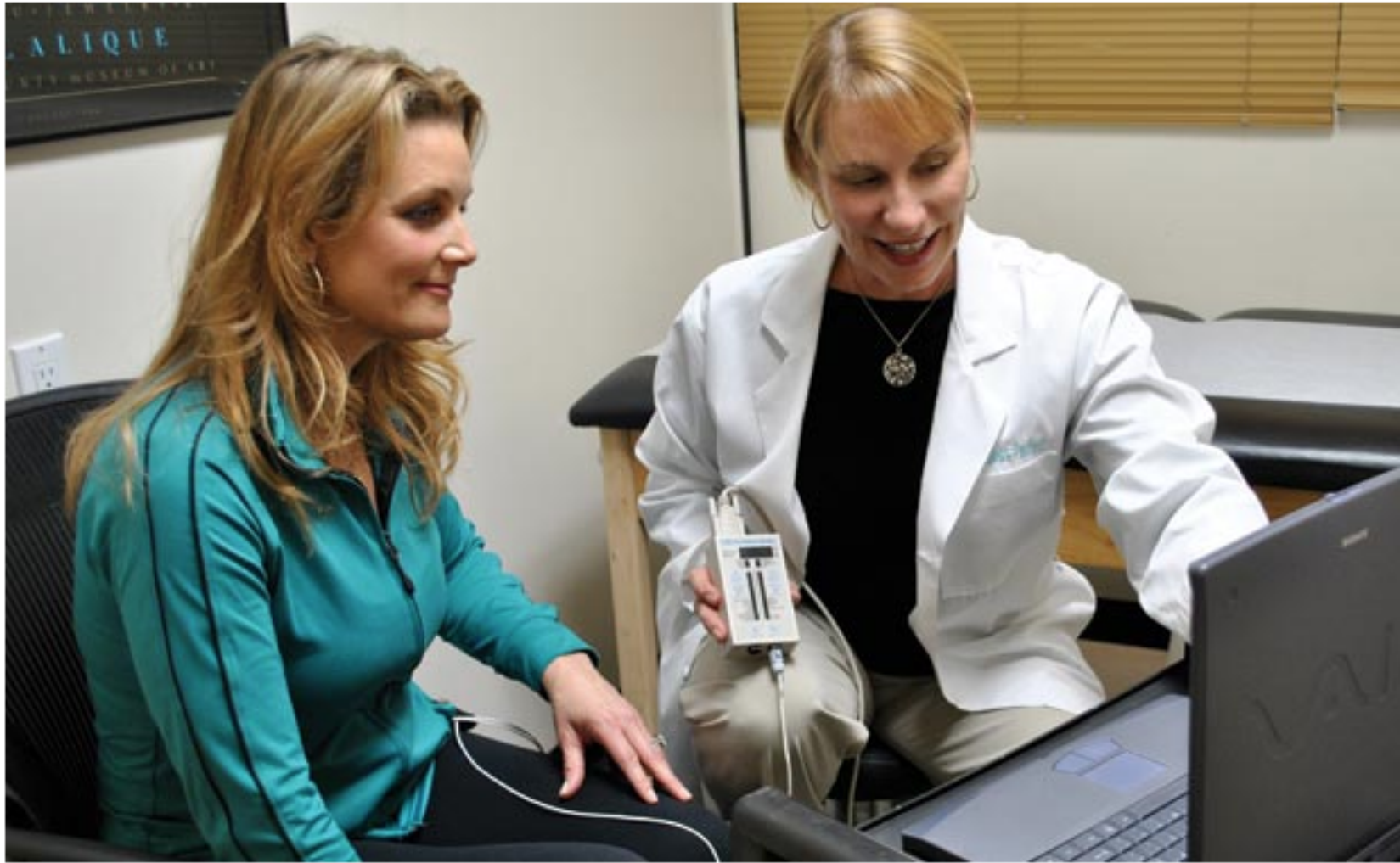


Women's Pelvic and Urological Health ▶ Treatment ▶ The Bathroom Key: Put an End to Incontinence

The Bathroom Key: Put an End to Incontinence

TREATMENT This underdiagnosed and underreported condition has major economic and psychosocial effects on women in society.



THE KEY ELEMENTS OF PHYSICAL THERAPY Kathryn giving Kim an actual SEMG Biofeedback session — to train her pelvic floor muscles — in a physical therapy session. Photo: Jeanette Kassai

What Exercises Can I Do at Home for Incontinence?



Kim Perelli will never forget the most awkward workout of her life. “Shortly after having my first baby, I went to the gym, hopped on the treadmill and began to run. About a half mile into my run I realized I was soaked between my legs. I quickly tied a sweatshirt around my waist and shuffled out as fast as I could.”

Searching for solutions

Urinary incontinence, the leakage of urine brought on by sneezing, coughing, or even standing from a seated position, occurs when an urge comes on that’s too intense to get to a bathroom in time. Informed by her gynecologist that nothing could alleviate the problem until she was through having kids, Perelli accepted the disappointing diagnosis.

“For the next two years, I avoided doing anything that involved impact exercise. After my second child was born, I started looking for a solution. I felt extremely uncomfortable both physically and emotionally when I went to a urologist for testing.”

Perelli wasn’t alone in coping with incontinence. Consider “Erica,” the former homecoming queen who spent most of her high school reunion avoiding the dance floor, after a series of leaks. And new mother “Terry,” who returned to her job in the fashion industry, only to suffer an embarrassing accident during an office luncheon.

Finding natural relief

Luckily, they all found relief naturally through physical therapy. Wanting to share this “secret,” Perelli co-wrote the book *The Bathroom Key: Put an End to Incontinence*. Kathryn Kassai — co-author, PT, and owner of Praxis PT in San Pedro, CA — says most females, often filled with shame, are unaware surgery and medications aren’t their only options.

“Non-invasive surface EMG demystifies the pelvic floor muscles, as patients can see their muscles exercising correctly on a computer screen — curing stress and urge incontinence, lifting prolapsed organs and alleviating pelvic pain. Through Pilates and correct use of the Kegel muscle, women can find relief.”

Kassai says it’s unacceptable the average female waits eight years to get help.

“Physicians are the gatekeepers of this silent epidemic. Doctors should routinely refer women to physical therapy early. 50 percent of all women in the U.S. have incontinence at some point. They can achieve better bladder behavior. It’s never too early or too late to start.”

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Many women with varying degrees of pelvic pain and their physicians are turning to physical therapy to help ease discomfort.

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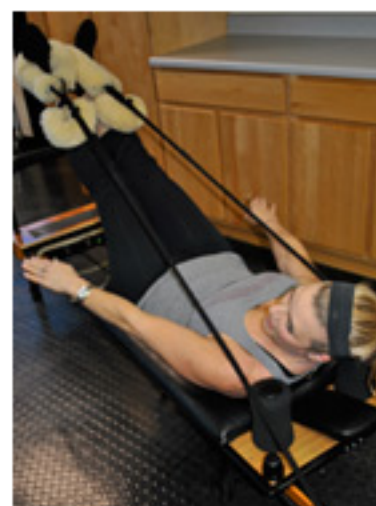
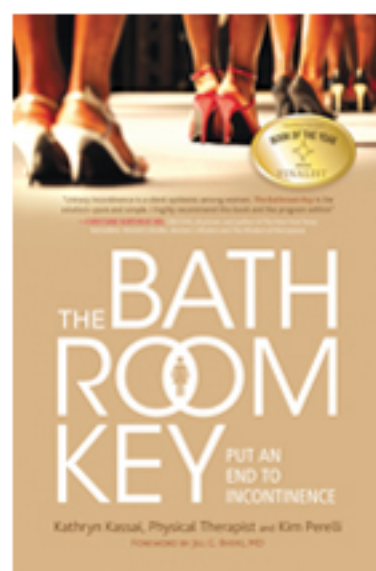
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Kim Perelli doing a Pilates exercise on the reformer. Photo: Jeanette Kassai