

# Pelvic Floor Dialogues

So I pee a little when I laugh. That's normal right?

How has my body changed "down there" since I had my baby?

Everyone talks about Kegels. Do they really work? How much is enough?

12.2017 | ISSUE 25

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## Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction for IC/BPS



For women living with interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome (IC/BPS), stress can bring on bladder flares. Flares are a marked increase of intense bladder symptoms and pain. And, for many women, with flares comes a wave of helplessness. Researchers at the University of New Mexico wondered if mindfulness might help women better cope with stress-related flares. Mindfulness is being fully present in the moment. It is a focus on where we are and what we're doing. And, mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) melds meditation with yoga to refocus the brain. Twenty women with IC/BPS were divided into two study groups. One group continued with their usual care. The second learned MBSR and used it along with their usual care. Nearly all (86 percent) of the MBSR group reported they felt more empowered and better able to better cope with bladder flares. Thus, MBSR is a promising therapy for IC/BPS flares.

- Learn more [about IC/BPS](#): Download the AUGS fact sheet
- Find out more [about mindfulness](#): Here's everything you need to know

## Kickboxing Urinary Urgency Incontinence—Yoga vs. Mindfulness

About 600 miles north, at a university in Utah, researchers studied mindfulness and [urinary urge incontinence](#) (UUI). UUI is leakage that occurs with the sudden, strong desire to pass urine. In this small study, women with UUI did daily MBSR. And, how often they leaked decreased. In a follow-up study, researchers compared the effect of mindfulness versus yoga on UUI symptoms. Women 22 to 79 years of age participated in the study. Researchers divided them into two groups: MBSR or yoga. Across a two-month period, each group met weekly. In this duel, MBSR “knocks out” yoga. At eight weeks, leakage episodes among the MBSR group decreased by more than half (56 percent). In the yoga group, symptoms improved by one third (33 percent). Even more striking, was the difference after one year of therapy. The number of leakage episodes among women in the MBSR group declined by two thirds (67 percent). For those in the yoga group, symptom improvement declined to below 20 percent. These studies highlight the potential value of MBSR for UUI. Research with larger groups of women are needed to confirm these promising findings.

- Hear [experts discuss UUI](#): Watch a video with Dr. Karen Noblett
- Try three [yoga poses](#) to help you beat your sneaky leak—though yoga lost this match, studies show it helps manage UUI

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## POP Zapping your ZZZs? Tap into Your Mind-Body Connection



[Pelvic organ prolapse](#) (POP), the dropping of the bladder, uterus or rectum caused by a loss of vaginal support, is a very common problem. And, it may be a real downer when it comes to getting a good night's sleep. Interestingly, for younger women POP really messes with those much-needed nightly ZZZs. Could mindfulness be the answer? Research on mindfulness and insomnia gives hope. Studies found that MBSR helped those with chronic sleep problems get better quality sleep. Though participants did not sleep longer, they woke feeling more refreshed. Mindfulness therapy proved to be as good as sleep medicines, without the side effects.

- Connect with other women with POP: Join the [patient-only](#), confidential AUGS community
- Learn other things you can do to improve your sleep: [Sleep hygiene tips](#)

## Get Your Mind “In the Mood”

Given mindfulness holds promise for many women's health issues, will mindfulness-foreplay improve lovemaking? Indeed, a review article on mindfulness therapy for sexual problems summarizes the findings of 11 studies. Participants struggled with low desire, sexual arousal issues, dryness, trouble reaching orgasm, and painful sex. In total, the studies reflect the experience of 335 women. Half of the women used mindfulness techniques before intimacy. The majority noted improved sexual desire, response, and arousal. Vaginal lubrication, orgasm, and sexual pain improved to a lesser degree. Overall, getting your mind in the mood may increase sexual pleasure. The usual caveats apply. We need more studies with larger groups of women. Also, outcomes must be compared with other treatment options. However, mindfulness is an inexpensive therapy you can do at home.

- Want to learn more? [DIY mindfulness](#) has simple exercises to calm the mind and heat up your desire
- Need help with vaginal dryness? Learn about [vaginal estrogen therapy](#)

## Around the Web

- Count'em: 8 pelvic floor muscles to [spice up your sex life](#) and make your orgasms much more powerful
- Urinary incontinence warning: Ignoring leaks could lead to [skin problems](#)
- AUGS publishes [best practice statement on pelvic organ prolapse](#)
- [Pelvic problems post-pregnancy](#) make women suffer silently



## The Rest of the Story

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