

SEPARATION OF YOUR ABDOMINAL MUSCLES (DIASTASIS OF THE RECTUS ABDOMINUS MUSCLES – DRAM)

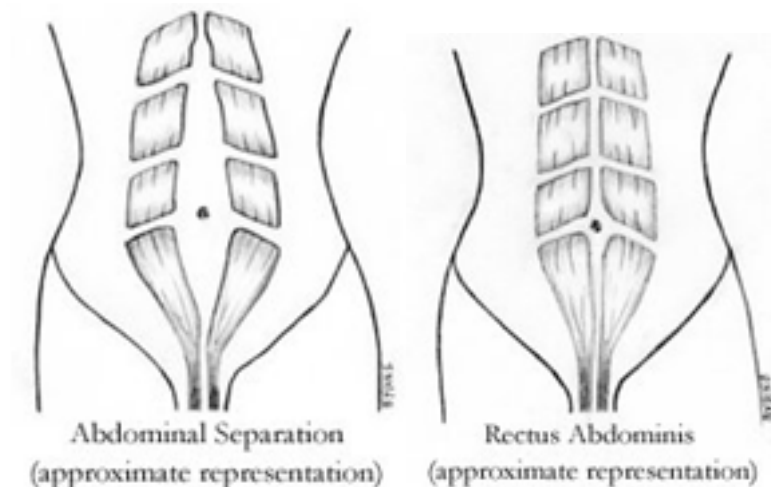
Your abdominal muscles have a significant role in supporting your pelvis and back, and after pregnancy they are stretched and weakened and require special attention to get them back into shape.

Your deep abdominal muscles act as a natural corset to support your back, and are the most important muscles to exercise after having a baby.

Separation of your abdominal muscles is also called Diastasis of the Rectus Abdominus Muscles or DRAM.

During pregnancy, the abdominal muscles and associated ligaments and tendons must stretch to accommodate for the growing baby. A Diastasis of the Rectus Abdominus Muscle occurs when the connective tissue joining the long abdominal muscles widens and separates.

This condition is generally not painful, but can lead to persistent lower back and pelvic pain if the dysfunction is not corrected through appropriate management and strengthening.



A physiotherapist may assess your abdominal muscles to determine if there has been separation of your rectus abdominus after the birth of your baby. You may be given a support band to wear and advice about exercises.

If you have been diagnosed with separation of greater than 4cm, please make an appointment with your women's health physiotherapist at six weeks to progress your abdominal exercises safely. Our Physio team can provide you with a contact number of a physiotherapist in your local area.

Sit up exercises should be avoided for at least six weeks, and longer if you have any separation (DRAM).

Deep abdominal muscle exercises:

While sitting, lying or side lying, place your hands on your lower abdomen with fingers just inside your hip bones. Start by gently activating your pelvic floor muscles then gently draw in the lower part of your tummy. You will feel gentle tension under your fingers. Try to keep breathing normally and don't pull in your upper tummy muscles.

You can combine your pelvic floor muscle exercises with your deep abdominal muscle exercises, as these muscles work together.



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