

Our Unique Approach to Chronic Pelvic Pain

The Pelvic Pain Regional Specialty Center, PLLC, is the first and only health care facility in the State of Kentucky dedicated exclusively to the evaluation, treatment, and management of Chronic Pelvic Pain (CPP). We offer a state-of-the-art compassionate multi-disciplinary approach that has helped thousands of women find relief. From your very first visit to the Pelvic Pain Regional Specialty Center, we will become your partners in helping you feel better!



Your First Visit

Even before arriving for your first appointment at the Pelvic Pain Regional Specialty Center, you probably will wonder how our exam will differ from other gynecological exams you have had. The answer in short is that this exam will be a more comprehensive one and will likely involve a number of diagnostic tests and procedures that you have not had before.

You'll begin our partnership by sitting down woman-to-woman with one of our highly-trained Nurse Practitioners. Each of these professionals has attained a Master of Science in Nursing degree in a specialty related to Women's Health. Our staff is extremely knowledgeable, experienced, and dedicated to making you as comfortable as possible discussing personal information that might be difficult for you to ordinarily talk about. Our Nurse Practitioners possess the background, skills, and expertise required to perform physical examinations, provide patients with valuable health information, and to collaborate with physicians in order to provide the highest quality total care.

Of great importance to us will be an understanding of the past and present status of your pain and the chronology and how it developed. How and when did it begin? What actions or activities make it better or worse? Does it vary based on time of day, week, or menstrual cycle? Does it affect your sleep? Has it spread beyond where it was first noted? Has it affected

your daily routine at home or at work? What have you personally done to attempt to alleviate the pain? What do you think is causing your pain? What concerns you the most about your pain?

Our initial physical examination for chronic pelvic pain will differ from a standard gynecologic exam since it is designed to provide information far beyond the condition of the female genital structures (e.g. cervix, uterus, tubes, and ovaries). Since the pelvis serves as the critical support structure for the upper body and is the connection to the lower body, the condition of the upper and lower body structures may affect the pelvis and vice-versa. Observations will be made concerning your posture, gait, back and abdomen, thighs, and upper legs. Changes in skin sensation, numbness, or tenderness can give clues to the specific pelvic nerves involved. You may be asked to tense and relax pelvic and abdominal muscles during the examination in order to clarify findings and to reveal certain disorders of pelvic support. Urological or gastrointestinal problems also can cause chronic pelvic pain and those systems may require evaluation as well.

At the end of your first visit to the Center, diagnostic studies such as blood tests, x-rays, and ultrasound examinations may be ordered. In addition, our Staff will work with you before you leave to order copies of your pertinent Medical Records for our review.

Your Second Visit

On your second visit to the Pelvic Pain Regional Specialty Center, you will be examined by a Center physician, who will continue the process of evaluating the source of your pain and will begin the development of a Treatment Plan just for you - utilizing the latest protocols and techniques currently available in the management and treatment of Chronic Pelvic Pain (CPP).

In certain cases, your doctor may determine that a more sophisticated diagnostic technique, such as a CAT scan or MRI, or an outpatient procedure is an important next step for assessing your pain. For example, laparoscopic exams are often critical in determining factors contributing to your pain as well as sometimes treating them. The particular surgical procedure(s) used will depend on the conditions discovered.

Therapeutic Approaches

Regardless of the source of your particular CPP, several important common philosophies and elements will characterize our Center's unique integrated approach:

1) Pain and its perception are located in the nervous system, which includes body and mind; therefore, pain is not exclusively "all in your body" nor "all in your head". Therapies must be directed to BOTH areas in order for effective treatment and reduction of pain.

2) Multiple interactive problems, rather than a single problem, are likely in CPP. The question is not what treatment is recommended, but what treatments.

3) The precise "percent" contribution of each pain factor to the total amount of your pain is difficult to assess. The initial factor that caused your pain, although important to locate and treat, may evolve into only a minor factor as pain becomes chronic with secondary factors becoming more important. Therefore, all factors must be treated rather than just the ones you or prior physicians thought to be most important.

4) Improvement of your CPP may take time, even though our physician is trying to give you relief as soon as possible. It took time for your pain to develop into the way it presents today. It may, therefore, take weeks to months for this stepwise progressive improvement to occur. Relaxation and emotional support techniques can be helpful during those periods to help preserve your patience and positive state of mind.

5) Pain medications (analgesics) may be used during the early stages of treatment since many therapies may take time to give relief. These medications are, however, not the cure for your pain, but merely a temporary supportive measure until other therapies "kick in" with their relieving effects. Remember that all medications have potential side effects, especially the narcotic analgesics with their strong dependency potential.

6) A combination of medications may prove more effective than a single type of medication. Analgesics may be more effective if combined with different medications that have been shown to have direct effects on mood and pain transmission.



7) Your therapy may include direct manipulative techniques externally and internally to improve abnormal musculoskeletal physiology. Specific exercises to stretch or strengthen certain muscles or muscle groups may be advised and taught. Ancillary techniques -- such as the TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) unit, trigger point injections, Massage Therapy, or alternative and complementary medicine may be used. Psychological evaluation and treatment may be integral to successful pain reduction.



**Pelvic Pain
Regional Specialty
Center, PLLCSM**

*Improving the Quality of
Life for WomenSM*

Call (502) 899-3009 to schedule an appointment with the Pelvic Pain Regional Specialty Center in Louisville, Kentucky. Reduction of your pain to low or barely noticeable levels will hopefully allow you to refocus your attention away from pain and to effectively return to an active and fulfilling life!