

Comparison 2: Postnatal PFMT compared with no intervention or usual care for treatment of incontinence

Source: Woodley SJ, Lawrenson P, Boyle R, Cody JD, Mørkved S, Kernohan A, Hay-Smith EJC. Pelvic floor muscle training for preventing and treating urinary and faecal incontinence in antenatal and postnatal women. Cochrane Database Syst Rev.2020;(5):CD007471.

Certainty assessment							No of patients		Effect		Certainty (GRADE)	Importance
No of studies	Study design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	PFMT	No PFMT or usual care	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)		
Urinary incontinence late postnatal period (> 6–12 months)												
3 ^a	randomized trials	very serious ^b	serious ^c	not serious	serious ^d	none	188/341 (55.1%)	257/355 (72.4%)	RR 0.55 (0.29 to 1.07)	326 fewer per 1000 (from 514 fewer to 51 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Urinary incontinence late postnatal period (> 6–12 months) – PFMT vs no PFMT												
1	randomized trials	serious ^e	not serious	not serious	serious ^f	none	12/43 (7.9%)	19/19 (100.0%)	RR 0.29 (0.18 to 0.47)	710 fewer per 1000 (from 820 fewer to 530 fewer)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	CRITICAL
Urinary incontinence late postnatal period (> 6–12 months) – PFMT vs usual care												
2	randomized trials	very serious ^b	not serious	not serious	serious ^d	none	176/298 (59.1%)	238/336 (70.8%)	RR 0.80 (0.61 to 1.06)	142 fewer per 1000 (from 276 fewer to 43 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Urinary incontinence long term (> 5–10 years) – PFMT vs usual care												
1	randomized trials	very serious ^b	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	201/263 (76.4%)	201/253 (79.4%)	RR 0.96 (0.88 to 1.05)	32 fewer per 1000 (from 95 fewer to 40 more)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	CRITICAL
Urinary incontinence very long term (> 10 years) – PFMT vs usual care												
1	randomized trials	very serious ^b	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	190/230 (82.6%)	194/241 (80.5%)	RR 1.03 (0.94 to 1.12)	24 more per 1000 (from 48 fewer to 97 more)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	CRITICAL

Certainty assessment							No of patients		Effect		Certainty (GRADE)	Importance
No of studies	Study design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	PFMT	No PFMT or usual care	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)		
Faecal incontinence late postnatal period (> 6–12 months) – PFMT vs usual care												
2	randomized trials	very serious ^b	serious ^c	not serious	serious ^d	none	17/292 (5.8%)	45/328 (13.7%)	RR 0.68 (0.24 to 1.94)	44 fewer per 1000 (from 104 fewer to 129 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Faecal incontinence long term (> 5–10 years) – PFMT vs usual care												
1	randomized trials	very serious ^b	not serious	not serious	serious ^d	none	32/261 (12.3%)	32/248 (12.9%)	RR 0.95 (0.60 to 1.50)	6 fewer per 1000 (from 52 fewer to 65 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Faecal incontinence very long term (> 10 years) – PFMT vs usual care												
1	randomized trials	very serious ^b	not serious	not serious	serious ^d	none	43/228 (18.9%)	35/240 (14.6%)	OR 1.36 (0.84 to 2.22)	43 more per 1000 (from 20 fewer to 129 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
Urinary incontinence-specific quality of life – PFMT vs usual care												
1	randomized trials	very serious ^b	not serious	not serious	very serious ^{d,g}	none	9	9	-	MD 1.66 lower (3.51 lower to 0.19 higher)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL

CI: confidence interval; MD: mean difference; RR: risk ratio.

a. Control group: two trials considered the control group as usual care. The third trial considered the control group as relaxation massage of back and extremities by a physiotherapist, asking women not to exercise the pelvic floor at home.

b. Most of the pooled effect provided by studies “B” or “C” but with a substantial proportion (i.e. > 50%) from studies “C”.

c. Severe, unexplained, heterogeneity ($I^2 \geq 60\%$ or $\text{Chi}^2 < 0.05$).

d. Wide confidence interval crossing the line of no effect.

e. Most of the pooled effect provided by studies “B” or “C” but without a substantial proportion (i.e. < 50%) from studies “C”.

f. Less than 300 participants.

g. Less than 400 participants.