

## **PUDENDAL NEURALGIA/PUDENDAL NERVE ENTRAPMENT (PN/PNE)**

Pudendal Neuralgia can be a difficult and devastating condition for both women and men. It is difficult to diagnose and patients often suffer for years before getting treatment. Classic symptoms include severe pain in perineum(between your legs) which is usually worse with sitting. In the beginning patients may feel better sitting on a toilet seat, lying or standing. After a period of time, they have pain no matter what position. Pain is often reported in the vagina, rectum, into the lower abdomen and inner thighs. In men – rectal, scrotal &/or penile pain is often present. The area near the “sit bones” is usually quite sensitive. Patients often describe a feeling of “cut glass shards, hot acid burning or sharp severe shooting pains.” Milder symptoms reported include a feeling of sitting on a tennis ball or having something “thick” stuck in the vagina or rectum. One of the biggest challenges is trying to determine if the patient’s symptoms are due to a nerve that is actually entrapped (by scar tissue or previous injury) or if it is being compressed due to muscle shortening, spasms and lack of mobility of the connective tissue in the area. At present, there are no reliable tests to truly determine the source of pain.

### **HOW WE CAN HELP**

We are fortunate to have a very close working relationship with Dr. Michael Hibner of the Arizona Pelvic Pain Center. We strongly believe that all patients should receive a P.T. evaluation and treatment to see how much of their pain and symptoms can be relieved with work on the musculoskeletal system. We coordinate all treatments with the patient’s doctors. We are finding that a comprehensive approach is most successful – this includes medications, physical therapy, relaxation and coping techniques and often injections.

### **OUT OF TOWN PATIENTS**

Many patients come from different states and often other countries for an evaluation by Dr. Hibner. He requests that all patients also have a physical therapy evaluation at our clinic, since he finds our input invaluable in determining the plan of care for each patient. Some patients have had excellent physical therapy, others have not had therapy or had P.T. with therapists unfamiliar with this particular condition. Therefore, we offer a one time evaluation/treatment for out of town patients. The exam time is 60 – 90 min. This includes an exam (as tolerated) a review of past and present P.T. treatments and significant education for each patient. If you are planning surgery, the therapist will review the post-operative protocol, safe body mechanics and exercises. Your therapist will also be available to you and/or your home physical therapist to answer any questions once you return home. Our goal is to help you and Dr. Hibner achieve a great outcome and return you to your maximum functional ability.