

# WHAT IS A CYSTOCELE?

A cystocele, or prolapsed bladder, is a protrusion of the bladder into your vaginal canal.

The bladder is a hollow, muscular organ that collects urine from the kidneys. Once full, the bladder releases urine through the urethra and out of the body.

## Signs and Symptoms of a Cystocele

- Urine leakage
- Incomplete emptying of the bladder

## Causes of a Cystocele

If your vaginal wall and pelvic floor weaken, your bladder loses support and can fall and bulge into your vagina. A cystocele often occurs as a result of heavy straining during childbirth. Other repeated straining such as chronic constipation or heavy lifting can also lead to a cystocele.

As a woman goes through menopause, her estrogen levels fall. This leads to a weakening of the muscles surrounding the vagina, increasing the risk of prolapse.

It is common for the bladder and urethra to prolapse together.

## Treatment Is Possible!

A cystocele can cause embarrassment, fear, anxiety, and social isolation. For these reasons, it is important to take steps to address the problem.

Seeking treatment from a trained **Pelvic Health Physiotherapist** can not only help with the problem but also can improve self-esteem and restore confidence.



A mild cystocele, where your bladder has dropped a small amount into your vagina.

**GRADE 1**

A more severe cystocele, where your bladder has dropped enough to reach the opening of your vagina.

**GRADE 2**

The most severe type of cystocele, where your bladder is bulging through the opening of your vagina.

**GRADE 3**

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