



BUMPS INFO SHEET 1

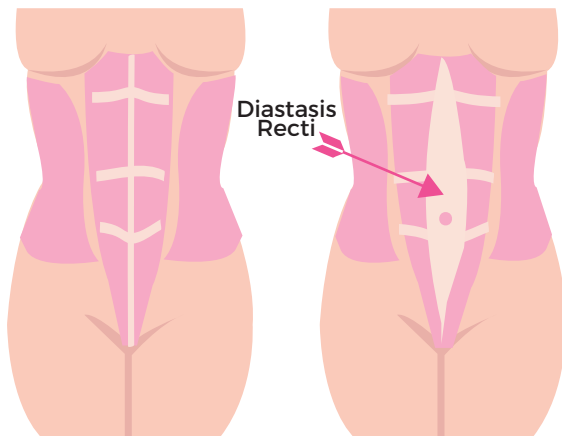
Diastasis of Rectus Abdominus (DRAM)

DRAM DURING PREGNANCY?

Approximately 2 out of 3 women experience separation of the Rectus Abdominus muscle, usually in the last trimester. It is caused by a combination of the growing baby stretching the abdominal wall, hormonal changes, weight gain & weakness due to stretching of the abdominal wall.

The abdominals need to stretch a little bit (1-2 cm) during pregnancy to allow for the growth of the baby, however in some women they stretch a lot.

Women who suffer from a larger DRAM (>3cm separation) are more likely to experience low back pain, hernia's, pelvic girdle pain & pelvic floor dysfunction.



SIGNS:

- ! Coning or peaking of the abdominals when going from lying to sitting
- ! A stretching/straining sensation at top and centre of the abdominals

So what can I do about DRAM while I'm pregnant?

- ♡ Wear a tubigrip to support the abdominals
- ♡ Perform deep abdominal & pelvic floor exercises
- ♡ Supervised pilates sessions
- ♡ Avoid heavy lifting or carrying toddlers
- ♡ No sit ups, roll to your side to get up
- ♡ Do not strain your central abdominals
- ♡ Work your deep abdominals
(transversus abdominus)

POSTNATAL DRAM?

It is important to work on the DRAM postnatally to prevent low back pain & injury with weakness in the abdominal wall.

A supervised pilates program of specific exercises with a Physiotherapist will help improve your DRAM and help you to engage your core and pelvic floor muscles again. You will need to avoid any sit ups until the DRAM has resolved. This is important in the first 6-12 months postnatally, especially when you are required to do so much lifting and bending with your new born baby.

If a significant DRAM remains at 1 year post birth then sometimes a referral to a specialist is required.