

# "I finally have my life back!"

**After pelvic organ prolapse left Teisa Earhart constantly running to the bathroom, she feared this would be her new 'normal.' But then she discovered a few easy exercises that changed it all!**

**"H**oney, I'll be outside if you change your mind—I know you love our walks," Teisa Earhart's husband said, concern in his eyes. Teisa waved him out the door. "Next time," she sighed. "I just need to lie down."

For a decade, the Minnesota bank teller had been unable to walk for more than 15 minutes without an urgent bathroom break, the peaceful nature walks she once loved a distant memory.

*Will this be my fate for the rest of my life?* Teisa despaired. *Will this discomfort ever stop?*

## Losing hope

"When I was in my early 50s, urinary urgency and incontinence became my constant companions," says Teisa. "At the time, I thought wearing incontinence undergarments was a normal part of aging, but when the pressure, bulging and irritation inside my vagina got worse, my doctor diagnosed me with pelvic organ prolapse, a condition in which one or more pelvic organs—in this case, my bladder—collapse into the vaginal walls and protrude from the vagina. It occurs when the pelvic floor

is severely weakened—in my case, due to childbirth and a hysterectomy.

"I tried to find a nonsurgical way to treat it, but the physical therapy and biofeedback my doctors suggested did nothing. I lived in constant fear, searching out bathrooms everywhere I went while growing emotionally and physically exhausted. As my prolapse worsened from grade 1 to 3 and the pain increased, I was fitted with a pessary, a device worn inside the vagina to help support the pelvic organs. But my pelvic floor was so weak that it couldn't hold it in place. I was so upset that I broke out in hives, arriving at urgent care in tears.

"With my options waning, I consulted with a surgeon, but was scared when the procedure and risks were explained. *There has to be something else I could try*, I thought desperately.

## A natural fix

"One day, I came across a Facebook group called 'Hypopressives for Prolapse,' which shared about a natural solution for my problem. Hypopressives, I learned, employs a series of yoga-like poses paired with a unique breathing technique to help women restore their pelvic health.

"As I became involved in the group, I was thrilled—I no longer felt alone! Reading the remarkable testimonials from women who were seeing improvement in their prolapses, I felt hopeful for the first time in years.

"I connected with Trista Zinn, founder of CoreSet Fitness (CoreSetFitness.com), North America's first hypopressives master trainer and instructor, who took me on. In my first Skype session with Trista, she explained that hypopressives was designed to decrease pressure to the abdominal and pelvic cavity, which activates a lift in the pelvic organs. She stressed that it was important that women with prolapse seek out a qualified instructor to assess and teach them the correct technique, as she would do for me. But after just six to eight sessions spread over three months, I would be able to do the poses on my own.

"After the first series of stretches during my initial session, I was surprised to actually feel my pelvic organs moving up and away from the vaginal opening and a nice stretch in my lower abdomen. Fascinated, I continued my Skype sessions with Trista and quickly fell into a daily

routine of doing the relaxing poses for 10 to 30 minutes each day.

"After a few months of practice, I noticed I wasn't running to the bathroom as much. A few months later, the bulge disappeared and I was thrilled when my doctor confirmed my prolapse had reversed from a grade 3 to a grade 1—news I immediately called Trista to share.

"After my miracle results saved me thousands of dollars on surgery, I wanted to bring the healing to more women and began training with Trista to become a hypopressives instructor. I now teach in-person and online sessions at One Agora Integrative Health (OneAgoraHealth.com) in Bloomington, Minnesota. An initial 1-hour session is \$75 and includes a full assessment, then \$60 per 45 minutes or \$200 for four classes.

"Like many of my clients, I now live symptom-free, and at 61, I can enjoy the beautiful walking trails of Minnesota with my husband again—our last was over 3 hours with no bathroom breaks. Hunting down restrooms is a thing of the past and I crossed incontinence undergarments off my shopping list—for good!"

—As told to Monica Romano

## These hypopressive exercises help cure pelvic prolapse

**Pelvic prolapse affects up to 50% of women.** While surgery is often advised, hypopressive exercises can correct the problem, asserts Trista Zinn, a pelvic health specialist and master trainer in the technique. The poses, combined with a key breathing pattern, lift and strengthen the pelvic floor to keep internal organs where they belong. In fact, one study found DIY hypopressives to be as effective as one-on-one training at reducing symptoms of pelvic floor dysfunction.

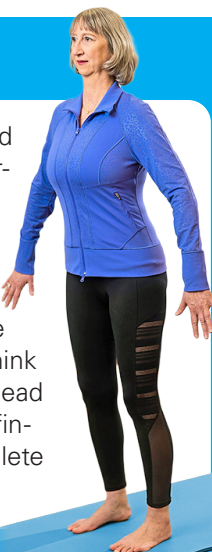
To get the benefits, try the poses at right that helped Teisa Earhart. Once you've settled into a pose, do this breathing pattern: Take three slow, deep breaths; on the third exhale, let all of the air out; close your mouth and mimic taking a breath without letting air in by expanding your rib cage; hold as long as you can, then inhale when you need to. (For more how-to's, visit CoreSetFitness.com, or find an instructor at HypopressivesCanada.com).

**Hestia pose:** Sit with your legs crossed and lift your chest, keeping your spine long and tall. Place the heels of your hands on your knees, turning your elbows out. Then press your hands into your knees and complete three breath cycles.



**Demeter pose:** Lie on your back with your pelvis in a neutral position, knees bent and heels on the floor with your feet upright. Bring your arms to shoulder height and round them as if you were hugging a pillar, turning your palms out. Do three breath cycles.

**Venus pose:** Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees soft and arms spread away from your body like wings. Shift your weight slightly onto the balls of your feet and think about stretching your head to the ceiling and your fingers to the floor. Complete three breath cycles.



Teisa Earhart, 61, Bloomington, MN