

Fernanda Pipitone, M.D., Ph.D.

Board Certified Gynecologist and Obstetrician (Brazil)

Division of Urogynecology
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
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Education

PhD in Obstetrics and Gynecology Oct. 2025
University of São Paulo, Brazil

MD (Doctor in Medicine) Nov. 2012
Faculdade de Ciências Médicas da Santa Casa de São Paulo, Brazil

Research Experience

Active member

Brazilian Urogynecology Research Network (BURN) Nov 2025 – present

- Contribution to the early development of a national urogynecology research network
- Participation in collaborative, multicenter research initiatives across institutions

Independent researcher

Oct 2025 – present

Sao Paulo, Brazil

- Specialized expertise in pelvic floor imaging provided to research groups in Italy and Canada, involving image analysis, project collaboration, and trainee supervision
- Collaboration with radiologists in pelvic floor imaging research, providing clinical expertise and contributing to image analysis

Special research associate

Oct 2021 – present

Pelvic Floor Research Group – University of Michigan

Coordinators: John O.L. DeLancey M.D. and James A. Ashton-Miller Ph.D

- Research focus on childbirth-related pelvic floor trauma, emphasizing imaging findings, injury patterns, mechanisms of injury, and injury classification
- Conceptual and methodological contribution to projects aimed at improving injury prediction and informing preventive and rehabilitative strategies for pelvic floor disorders
- Extensive experience in pelvic floor imaging, including 3D ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging, supported by advanced training in pelvic floor anatomy
- Multidisciplinary research collaboration with biomechanical and electrical engineers and physical therapists, contributing to cross-disciplinary conceptual framework development and manuscript preparation for peer-reviewed journals across diverse disciplines

Short-term Scholar

May – Aug 2025

University of Michigan – Von Voigtlander Women’s Hospital

- Extended research immersion conducted as part of a collaborative PhD project between the University of São Paulo and the University of Michigan

- Doctoral dissertation developed and finalized in pelvic floor imaging, with emphasis on childbirth-related pelvic floor trauma
- Research productivity resulting in one published article, one submitted manuscript, and three manuscripts in preparation

Visiting Scholar

Jul 2019 – Oct 2021

University of Michigan – Von Voigtlander Women’s Hospital

- Full-time dedication to clinical research within the Pelvic Floor Research Group under the direct supervision of Dr. John O. L. DeLancey, MD, and Dr. James Ashton-Miller, PhD
- Research focus on pelvic floor imaging and childbirth-related pelvic floor trauma, including development of novel MRI-based quantitative techniques for perineal membrane morphology and levator ani muscle edema
- Expertise in qualitative and quantitative analysis of pelvic floor MRI (static, dynamic, and 3D imaging)
- Research productivity: first author on four articles and co-author of a book chapter
- Scientific presentations at national and international conferences (IUGA Annual Meeting; AUGS Pelvic Floor Disorders Week)
- Collaborative research involvement across multidisciplinary projects including pelvic floor biomechanics, prolapse imaging phenotypes, surgical outcomes, and pediatric pelvic floor imaging
- Clinical exposure through structured shadowing in Urogynecology, Urology, and specialized postpartum clinics
- Technical proficiency in imaging analysis using 3D Slicer and ImageJ

PhD student

Mar 2021 – Oct 2025

University of Sao Paulo – Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

- Main findings: We identified a pelvic floor imaging pattern (Hourglass-Band pattern) on 3D ultrasound and developed a scoring system. The Hourglass-Band pattern was strongly associated with difficult vaginal birth, distinct from levator ani avulsion and anal sphincter laceration, and potentially repairable.
- Data collection, project development and writing were conducted at the University of Michigan – Mentors: John O.L. DeLancey M.D. and James Ashton-Miller, Ph.D
- Advisor: Dr. Jorge Haddad, M.D. Ph.D
- Dissertation title: Perineal complex (Level III) assessment in postpartum women at high risk for pelvic floor injury on 3D endovaginal ultrasound

Clinical fellow

Mar 2018 – Jul 2019

Urogynecology Division – Hospital das Clínicas

University of Sao Paulo

- Training in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery.
- Fellowship dedicated to building strong surgical and clinical foundation, with 12 hours/week of operating room experience and 16 hours/week of outpatient care.
- The program includes operating room responsibility, observe and perform urodynamic testing, learn about pre- and postoperative care.

Resident

Mar 2014 – Feb 2017

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology – Hospital das Clínicas

University of Sao Paulo

- 3-year training focused on high-risk Obstetrics and Gynecology

Medical student

Mar 2007 – Nov 2012

Faculdade de Ciências Médicas da Santa Casa de São Paulo

- Excellent academic achievements; international programs.

Subintern

Sep – Dec 2012

Massachusetts General Hospital | Brigham and Women's Hospital

Harvard Medical School

Scholarship granted during last year of Medical School; emphasis given to Obstetrics and Gynecology

- Gynecologic Oncology and Pathology
- Embriopathology and Congenital Malformations
- Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

Medical student

Jan – Feb 2010

Department of Surgery

Beilinson Hospital, Tel Aviv, Israel

Observership across different surgical subspecialties

Publications

Published in peer-reviewed journals

1. **Pipitone F**, Swenson CW, DeLancey JOL, Ashton-Miller JA, Chen L. Perineal membrane structural changes: an unstudied aspect of prolapse. *Int Urogynecol J*. 2026 [accepted]
2. DeLancey JOL, Ashton-Miller JA, LaCross J, Schmidt P, Masteling M, **Pipitone F**, Hong CX, Chen L. Urogenital Hiatus Closure System: A Framework for Understanding how Muscle, Motor Control, and Fascial Connections Interact in Normal and Failed Closure. *Int Urogynecol J*. 2026 [accepted]
3. **Pipitone F**, Haddad JM, Chen L, Mastelin M, Schmidt PC, Fairchild PS, Ashton-Miller JA, DeLancey JOL. Perineal structural changes on 3D endovaginal ultrasound six months after difficult vaginal birth: the Hourglass-Band pattern and how it relates to levator ani avulsion and hiatus size. *Am J Obstet Gynecol*. 2025 Nov. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 41223961.
4. Alarab M, Jha S, **Pipitone F**, Cattani L, Yehude A, Giroux M, Sultan AH. Mode of Subsequent Delivery After Obstetric Anal Sphincter Injuries (OASIs). *Int Urogynecol J*, 2026 [accepted]
5. Clemente Oliveira B, Caetano Vilela Lauer M, Ferreira Dias L, Fraga Pontes Fernandez C, **Pipitone F**, Milhem Haddad J, Diets HP, Pardini Chamie L. Role of translabial ultrasound in pre- and postoperative assessment of midurethral slings for stress urinary incontinence. *Abdom Radiol (NY)*. 2025 Aug 20. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 40833606.
6. LaCross J, DeLancey JOL, Masteling M, **Pipitone F**, Ashton-Miller JA. On lingering pelvic floor musculoskeletal injuries in the postpartum athlete: are we adequately addressing them? *Sports Health*. [submitted]
7. Tai H, **Pipitone F**, Kalayeh K, LaCross J, Ashton-Miller JA, DeLancey JO, Fowlkes JB. Assessing Postpartum Levator Ani Muscle Recovery: A Feasibility Study on Automated Texture Analysis in Transvaginal Ultrasound. *Ultrasound Med Biol*. 2025 Dec;51(12):2217-2225. PMID: 40976767.
8. DeLancey JOL, Ashton-Miller JA, LaCross J, **Pipitone F**, Schmidt P, Chen L. Urogenital Hiatus Closure: Facts, Fallacies, and Why a Unified Theory of Hiatal Failure is Needed. *Int Urogynecol J*. 2025 May 7. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 40332520.
9. DeLancey JOL, Masteling M, **Pipitone F**, LaCross J, Mastrovito S, Ashton-Miller JA. Pelvic floor injury during vaginal birth is life-altering and preventable: what can we do about it? *Am J Obstet Gynecol*. 2024 Mar. PMID: 38168908.
10. DeLancey JO, **Pipitone F**, Masteling M, Xie B, Ashton-Miller JA, Chen L. Functional Anatomy of Urogenital Hiatus Closure: the Perineal Complex Triad Hypothesis. *Int Urogynecol J*. 2024 Feb. PMID: 38206338.

11. Cheng W, English E, Horner W, Swenson CW, Chen L, **Pipitone F**, Ashton-Miller JA, DeLancey JOL. Hiatal failure: effects of pregnancy, delivery, and pelvic floor disorders on level III factors. *Int Urogynecol J*. 2023 Feb. PMID: 36129480.
12. **Pipitone F**, DeLancey JO. The postpartum silence. *BJOG*. 2022 Feb 28. PMID: 35226407.
13. **Pipitone F**, Sadeghi Z, DeLancey JOL. Urethral function and failure: A review of current knowledge of urethral closure mechanisms, how they vary, and how they are affected by life events. *Neurourol Urodyn*. 2021 Nov; PMID: 34488242.
14. **Pipitone F**, Swenson CW, DeLancey JOL, Chen L. Novel 3D MRI technique to measure perineal membrane structural changes with pregnancy and childbirth: Technique development and measurement feasibility. *Int Urogynecol J*. 2021 Apr 24. PMID: 33893825.
15. **Pipitone F**, Duarte Thibault ME, Gaetke-Udager K, Fenner DE, Swenson CW. Musculoskeletal findings on MRI among postpartum women with persistent pelvic pain. *Int Urogynecol J*. 2021 Jul. PMID: 33040176.
16. **Pipitone F**, Miller JM, DeLancey JOL. Injury-associated levator ani muscle and anal sphincter oedema following vaginal birth: a secondary analysis of the EMRLD study. *BJOG*. 2021 May 20. PMID: 34013655.

Book chapters

1. **Pipitone F**, DeLancey JOL. Physiopathology of prolapse and model for monitoring changes in pelvic anatomy with age, parity and prolapse [Physiopathologie du prolapsus et modèle de suivi des modifications de l'anatomie pelvienne avec l'âge, la parité et le prolapsus]. In: Cosson M. *Chirurgie vaginale. In Press*.
2. DeLancey JOL, **Pipitone F**. Functional anatomy of prolapse and urogenital hiatal closure [Anatomie fonctionnelle du prolapsus et fermeture du hiatus urogénital]. In: Cosson M. *Chirurgie vaginale. In Press*.
3. DeLancey JOL, **Pipitone F**. Levels of pelvic support [Les niveaux de soutien de DeLancey]. In: Cosson M. *Chirurgie vaginale. In Press*.
4. DeLancey JOL, **Pipitone F**, Sadeghi Z. Anatomy of the urethra. In: Karram MM, Gebhart JB, Magrina JE, Falcone T, eds. *Atlas of Pelvic Anatomy & Gynecologic Surgery*. 6th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier. *In press*.
5. DeLancey JOL, **Pipitone F**. Chapter: Pregnancy and Childbirth: Pathophysiology, Injuries. In: Kari Bø (2023) - *Evidence-Based Physical Therapy for the Pelvic Floor*, 3rd edition.
6. DeLancey JOL, **Pipitone F**. Chapter: Pathophysiological Effects of Pregnancy and Childbirth on the Pelvic Floor. In: Thakar, Sultan, Lewicky-Gaupp (2022) - *Pelvic Floor, Perineal, and Anal Sphincter Trauma During Childbirth*.

Presentations at conferences

Invited talks

1. Treatment of Bladder Pain Syndrome. **Pipitone F**. 12^a Jornada Internacional de Uroginecologia, Sao Paulo, 2025. *Speaker in the main session*.
2. Biomechanical Principles Applied to Obstetric Practice. **Pipitone F**. 11^a Jornada Internacional de Uroginecologia, Sao Paulo, 2024. *Speaker in the main session*.
3. Diagnosis of Obstetric Anal Sphincter Laceration. **Pipitone F**. 10^a Jornada Internacional de Uroginecologia, Sao Paulo, 2024. *Speaker in the OASI Management Workshop*.
4. Surgical Treatment of SUI without Mesh: Results and Complication. **Pipitone F**. 10^a Jornada Internacional de Uroginecologia, Sao Paulo, 2024. *Speaker in the main session*. Hiatal Failure - Effects of

Pregnancy, Delivery and Impact on Recurrence. **Pipitone F.** IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting, 2023. *Speaker.*

5. Levator Ani Avulsion: Spectrum of Injury. **Pipitone F.** AUGS/IUGA Joint Meeting, 2022. *Speaker in the Ibero-American session.*

Oral presentations

6. Enlarged Level III pelvic support measurements after first birth and how exam abnormalities at 6 months postpartum may help predict prolapse development Schmidt PC, Fairchild PS, **Pipitone F**, DeLancey JOL, Fenner DE, Chen L. IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting, 2025. *Long oral presentation.*
7. Postpartum Perineal Complex Disruption in 3D Endovaginal Ultrasound. **Pipitone F**, Masteling M, Chen L, Ashton-Miller JA, Schmidt PC, Haddad JM, DeLancey JOL. AUGS PFD Week, 2024. *Short oral presentation.*
8. Assessing postpartum differences in pelvic floor structure orientation using 3D ultrasound: feasibility study. **Pipitone F**, Masteling M, Chen L, Ashton-Miller JA, Schmidt PC, Haddad JM, DeLancey JOL. IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting, 2023. *Short oral presentation.*
9. Appearance of the Normal and Abnormal Perineal Membrane On MRI. **Pipitone F**, Masteling M, Chen L, Ashton-Miller JA, Schmidt PC, Haddad JM, DeLancey JOL. AUGS/IUGA Joint Meeting, 2022. *Short oral presentation.*
10. Perineal membrane and prolapse in young women: Assessment of morphological changes using MRI-based 3D surface model. **Pipitone F**, Swenson CW, DeLancey JOL, Chen L. IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting, 2021. *Long oral presentation.*
11. Perineal membrane: 3D transvaginal ultrasound optimal visualization plane assessment verified on MRI. **Pipitone F**, Masteling M, Chen L, Swenson CW, Fairchild PS, Haddad JM, DeLancey JOL. IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting, 2021. *Short oral presentation.*
12. Perineal Membrane: 3D Transvaginal Ultrasound Optimal Visualization Plane Assessment Verified On MRI. **Pipitone F**, Swenson CW, DeLancey JOL, Chen L. AUGS PFD Week, 2021. *Oral presentation.*
13. Perineal Membrane and Prolapse in Young Women: Assessment of Morphological Changes Using MRI-Based 3D Surface Model. **Pipitone F**, Masteling M, Chen L, Swenson CW, Fairchild PS, Haddad JM, DeLancey JOL. AUGS PFD Week, 2021. *Short oral presentation.*
14. Pelvic muscle edema following vaginal birth: Are all three levator ani muscles and anal sphincter equally involved? **Pipitone F**, Miller JM, DeLancey JOL. IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting, 2020. *Short oral presentation.*
15. Musculoskeletal Findings on MRI Among Postpartum Women with Persistent Pelvic Pain. **Pipitone F**, Duarte Thibault ME, Gaetke-Udager K, Fenner DE, Swenson CW. AUGS PFD Week, 2020. *Short oral presentation.*

Posters

16. Pelvic floor structures fiber direction after vaginal birth as seen on ultrasound: feasibility study. SGS Annual Meeting, 2023. **Pipitone F**, Masteling M, Chen L, Haddad JM, DeLancey JOL. *Poster.*
17. The perineal complex. DeLancey JOL, Xie B, **Pipitone F**, Swenson CW, Masteling M, Chen L. SGS Annual Meeting, 2023. *Poster.*
18. Musculoskeletal findings on MRI among postpartum women with persistent pelvic pain. **Pipitone F**, Duarte Thibault ME, Gaetke-Udager K, Fenner DE, Swenson CW. IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting, 2020. *Poster.*
19. Pelvic muscle edema following vaginal birth: Are all three levator ani muscles and anal sphincter equally involved? **Pipitone F**, Miller JM, DeLancey JOL. AUGS PFD Week, 2020. *Poster.*

Teaching & Mentoring

Apr 2023 – present

Faculty

Hospital Sírio Libanês – Sao Paulo, Brazil

Geriatrics Postgraduate Course

Module: Diagnosis and Clinical Management of Urinary Incontinence

- Recurring teaching activity, delivered biannually to geriatricians and family medicine physicians

Course director and lecturer

Nov 2025

Independent course, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Course: Childbirth and the pelvic floor – why and how trauma occurs

- Interdisciplinary course for obstetricians, physical therapists and nurses
- Educational content:
 - Pelvic floor adaptations during pregnancy and mechanisms of injury
 - Evidence-based prevention of perineal lacerations
Episiotomy: current scientific evidence and clinical considerations
 - Postpartum management of perineal trauma complications
 - Vaginal pessary use in the postpartum period
Return to physical activity postpartum and implications for pelvic floor recovery

Instructor

Aug 2025

Brazilian Obstetrics and Gynecology Society

Obstetric Anal Sphincter Laceration Hands-on Workshop

Didactic lecture and supervised hands-on instruction in small-group training on anal sphincter laceration repair using an animal model (4 groups; total commitment: 6 hours)

Course director and lecturer

Sept 2023

Clínica Alira, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Workshop on Obstetric Perineal Trauma

- Interdisciplinary course for obstetricians, physical therapists and nurses
- Educational content:
 - Biomechanical principles applied to obstetric practice
 - Evidence-based perspectives on episiotomy
 - Clinical considerations in severe perineal trauma
 - Strategies for discussing pelvic floor health during prenatal care

Medical Preceptor

Mar 2017 – Feb 2018

Department of Gynecology – Hospital das Clínicas, University of Sao Paulo

- Clinical and surgical supervision of residents and medical students
- Didactic and evaluation responsibilities, including examinations and learner assessment
- Appointed through competitive selection process

Clinical Skills Preceptor

Mar 2011 – Feb 2012

Faculdade de Ciências Médicas da Santa Casa de São Paulo (Medical School)

- Assigned to second-year medical students based on academic performance ranking
- Provided instruction in physical examination (clinical skills)
- Supervised training in medical history taking and patient interviewing

Professional Development

Participant

Workshop and short courses

- 1. IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting** Jun 2024
 - The ICS Workshop on Neurourology: Basic Neuro Urology: Evaluation and Treatment of Neurogenic Lower Urinary Tract Dysfunction (nLUTD) – 4 hours
Course Chair: John Heesakkers MD
 - The New and Fundamentals of Overactive Bladder – 4 Hour
Course Chair: Dudley Robinson MD
- 2. AUGS PDF Week** Oct 2023
 - A Multi-scale Functional Approach to Studying Female Pelvic Soft Tissues - From Micro to Macro
Course Chair: Pamela Moalli MD PhD
- 3. AUGS/IUGA Joint Meeting** Sept 2019
 - Diagnosis and Repair of Third/Fourth Degree Obstetric Tears
Course chair: Raneer Thakar MD and Abdul Sultan MD
 - Urodynamics – interactive clinical scenarios
Course chairs: Willy Davila MD, Mikel Gray PhD, Tim McKinney MD, Marie Fidela Paraiso MD, Peter Sand MD.
- 4. Society of Gynecologic Surgery, Miami** Dec 2017
26th Annual Postgraduate Course in Advanced Gynecologic Surgery
 - Hands-on workshops with cadaver dissection – laparoscopic and vaginal gynecologic surgery
Course Chair: Rosanne Kho, MD.
- 5. Croydon University Hospital NHS, London** Jun 2016
 - Hands-on workshop: Episiotomy, Third- and Fourth-Degree Tears
Course Chair: Raneer Thakar, MD; Abdul Sultan, MD.
- 6. Royal Free Hospital, London** May 2015
 - Virtual Reality Laparoscopic Psychomotor Curriculum (workload: 300hs)
- 7. Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, London** May 2015
London
 - Childbirth and Pelvic Floor Trauma
 - Female Sexual Dysfunction and The Pelvic Floor
- 8. Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, London** May – Jun 2013
London
 - Basic Practical Skills in Obstetrics and Gynaecology
 - Basic Colposcopy Course

Professional affiliations

Attending physician, Nov 2025 – present
Division of Urogynecology
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology – Hospital das Clínicas
University of Sao Paulo

Coordinator Nov 2022 – present
Postpartum Clinic and Pelvic Floor Imaging
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology – Hospital das Clínicas
University of Sao Paulo

Attending physician Jan 2017 – Jan 2018
Obstetric Emergency Department and Labor Ward
Maternidade Pro Matre Paulista, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Attending physician Nov 2016 – Aug 2017
Obstetric Intensive Care Unit
Hospital e Maternidade Santa Joana, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Service

2026

Member, Local Organizing Committee
IUGA Annual Scientific Meeting – Fellow, Trainee, and Early Career Session

- Dedicated educational session focused on clinical decision-making, surgical strategy, and career development for fellows, trainees, and early career urogynecologists
- Participation in program development and moderation of roundtables and case discussions

2024

Member, Organizing Committee
11^a Jornada Internacional de Uroginecologia, University of Sao Paulo

- Development of conference scientific program
- Moderation of roundtables and case discussions

2024

Member, Organizing Committee
11^a Jornada Internacional de Uroginecologia, University of Sao Paulo
Multidisciplinary workshop on childbirth-related pelvic floor dysfunction

- Development of educational program
- Speaker on management and prevention of obstetric anal sphincter laceration

References

John O.L DeLancey, M.D. (mentor and research supervisor)
delancey@umich.edu

James A. Ashton Miller PhD (mentor and research supervisor)
jaam@umich.edu

Jorge M. Haddad (PhD advisor)
jorge_milhem@uol.com.br