

Pelvic Muscle Exercises/Kegels

Exercising your pelvic muscles every day will help improve urinary and/or accidental bowel leakage, as well as help prevent progression of pelvic organ prolapse. These muscles are located in the lower pelvic area and help support the pelvic organs. You can feel these muscles by tightening the rectum as if you are holding in gas.

Exercise

Identify the correct muscle by imagining that you are trying to prevent the passing of gas. Keep your abdomen, hips, and buttocks relaxed. Squeeze and hold for 5 seconds while continuing to breathe. Then relax for 5 seconds. Attempt to do these exercises 10 times in a row, 3 times a day.

Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** check to make sure you are using the correct muscle. Put your hand on your stomach, buttocks, or thigh. If you feel movement you are using the wrong muscle.
- **Don't** cross your legs during exercises.
- **Don't** do the exercises with a full bladder or while you are voiding.
- **Don't** strain. If these exercises feel strenuous, you are not doing them correctly.

When/Where/Duration

You can do these exercises wherever you choose: while you are sitting at home, in the car, or while standing in line at a store. When done properly, no one can see you doing them.

Be sure to contract/tighten this muscle if you are going to do any activity which would make you leak, such as coughing, lifting, sneezing, standing, or walking.

Improvement may be seen in three or four weeks. Leakage will become less. These exercises help improve and maintain your bladder and bowel control. You must consistently do them daily.

Helpful Hints

- Do your Kegels as often as possible. The more you do them, the faster the results.
- Use a frequent activity as a reminder. For example, do your Kegels every time you sit.
- Tighten your pelvic floor before you sneeze, get up from a chair, cough, laugh, or lift. This protects your pelvic floor from injury and can help prevent urinary leakage.