

Kegel Exercises

Pelvic muscle exercises (Kegels) are used to strengthen or retrain the muscles of the pelvic floor. Regular daily exercising of the pelvic muscles can improve and even prevent urinary incontinence.

How to do Kegel exercises

To get started:

- **Find the right muscles.** Imagine that you are trying to control the passage of gas... what do you do? You tighten or pull in the ring of muscle around your rectum - which is your pelvic floor. You should feel a lifting sensation or pulling in of your rectum without any muscle tensing in your legs, buttocks, or abdomen. Once you've identified your pelvic floor muscles, you can do the exercises in any position, although you might find it easiest to do them laying down at first.
- **Perfect your technique.** Tighten your pelvic floor muscles, hold the contraction for five seconds, and then relax for five seconds. Try it four or five times in a row. Work up to keeping the muscles contracted for 10 seconds at a time and relaxing for 10 seconds between contractions.
- **Maintain your focus.** For best results, focus on tightening only your pelvic floor muscles. Be careful not to flex the muscles in your abdomen, thighs, or buttocks. Avoid holding your breath. Instead, breathe freely during the exercises.
- **Repeat three times a day.** Aim for at least three sets of 10 repetitions a day or more if able.



Ideas of when to do exercises

Lying:

On sofa, in recliner, or in bed watching TV or reading a book.

Standing:

In the shower, while brushing your teeth, putting on make-up, washing hands, doing dishes, making meals, while waiting in line, or while standing and talking to someone.

Sitting:

While driving or riding in a car, while eating a meal, or at work. By doing these exercises one to five squeezes at a time in any one position for three weeks, a habit will develop and you will automatically be doing your Kegels during these activities.