



Pelvic Muscle Exercises To Improve Bladder Control

Pelvic muscle exercises strengthen the group of muscles called the pelvic floor muscles. These muscles relax and contract under your command to control the opening and closing of your bladder/sphincter. When these muscles are weak, urine leakage may result. However, you can exercise them and in many cases, regain your bladder control.

You need to build the strength and the endurance of your muscles. **THIS REQUIRES REGULAR EXERCISE.**

Below is general information concerning the exercises. You will also have the opportunity to specifically work on these exercises with our Nurse Practitioner either pre or postoperatively to assist in gaining maximum control of your pelvic floor muscles and bladder.

Pelvic Floor Exercises(Kegel Exercises)

Begin by locating the sphincter muscles to be exercised (Kegel exercises):

1. As you begin urinating, try to stop or slow the urine stream **WITHOUT** tensing the muscles of your legs, buttocks or abdomen. This is very important. Using other muscles will defeat the purpose of the exercise.
2. When you are able to stop or slow the stream of urine, you know that you have located the correct muscles. Feel the sensation of the muscles pulling inward and upward.
3. Once you figure out the correct muscles, discontinue the practice of stopping your urine stream.

TIPS (an alternative to stopping your urine flow)

- You may squeeze the area of the rectum to tighten the anus as if trying not to pass gas. This also helps locate the correct muscles.
- You may also stand in front of a mirror and see your penis and scrotum move slightly when you tighten the muscles this is verifying the correct muscles.
- Remember **NOT** to tense the abdominal, buttock or thigh muscles.

Now You Are Ready to Exercise Regularly:

1. After you have located the correct muscles, set aside time 2 times a day for the exercises.
2. Squeeze your muscles for a count of 1 and then relax. Initially start at 25 exercises twice a day. After surgery, we would gradually increase this to 25 and then 50 three times per day.

Optional items below can be purchased to assist, but are not always needed, depending on the bladder control.

("The Ball") (Inner thigh/adduction exercises)

1. Begin by placing a ball between your thighs.
2. Squeeze your thighs inward to the slow count of five. Then, relax the muscles completely to the slow count of five.
3. Your goal is to hold each contraction for five seconds, to relax for five seconds and to complete 3-4 sets twice daily.
- 4.

("The Belt)(Outer thighs/abduction exercises)

1. Begin by placing a belt or elastic band around your knees which will provide resistance.
2. Squeeze your thighs outward to the slow count of five. Then, relax the muscles completely to the slow count of five.
3. Your goal is to hold each contraction for five seconds, to relax for five seconds and to complete 3-4 sets twice daily.

Exercise your pelvic muscles regularly for a lifetime to improve and maintain bladder control.