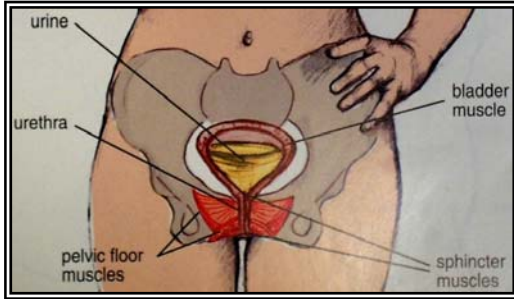


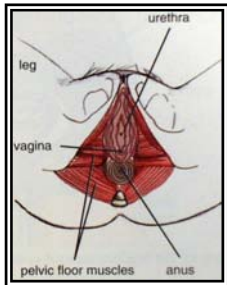
What is the Pelvic Floor?

The pelvic floor is made up layers of muscles situated across the area between the legs. When these muscles are strong and tight they hold up the bladder in its proper place and prevent it from sagging.



Parts of the bladder control system

The pelvic floor muscles also help prevent urine leakage by keeping the urethra closed. The urethra is the tube through which urine leaves the body when the bladder contracts.



Parts of the bladder control system

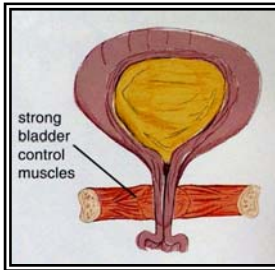
When the pelvic floor muscles are weak, they are unable to hold the urine during coughing, laughing, or when the bladder becomes too full.

IF THE MUSCLES OF YOUR PELVIC FLOOR ARE WEAK, YOU MAY HAVE PROBLEMS WITH URINARY INCONTINENCE.

What are Kegel Exercises?

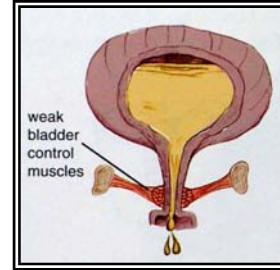
- Exercises designed to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles to reduce or stop urine leakage.
- They are easy and convenient to do at home.
- They must be done correctly and at least 30-50 times a day over a 6-8 week period in order to be effective.

After exercising



Strong muscles

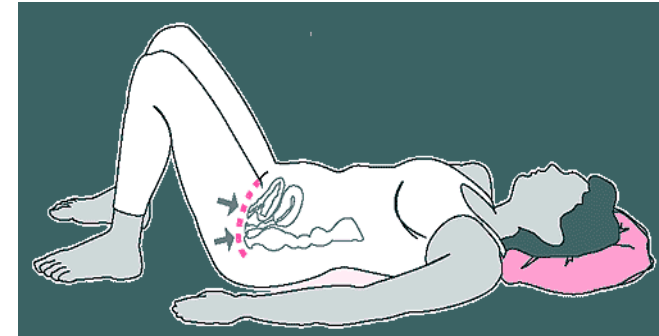
Before exercising



Weak muscles

Identify the Right Muscles

The most important step is to correctly identify the pelvic floor muscles.



- The pelvic floor muscles are the muscles that you use to hold in your urine. The muscles you should be using are located more towards the front of the body.
- Lying on your back, try squeezing the muscles around the vagina or the penis as if you were holding in your urine. Lift in and up. Don't push like if you were having a bowel movement. You should not be squeezing your buttocks or your stomach – try to keep them relaxed.
- Place one finger in your vagina to make sure you are squeezing the right muscles. You should feel the contraction of the pelvic floor muscles.

ONCE YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED THE CORRECT MUSCLES, YOU ARE READY TO BEGIN THE EXERCISES.

How to do the Kegel Exercises?

Step 1: In a lying position, tighten the pelvic floor muscles for 6 seconds. You should feel the muscles around the urethra and vagina pulling inward and upward. Do not hold your breath – breathe normally. Do not tighten your stomach or buttocks – keep them relaxed. Once you can do the exercises lying down, try them in a sitting position, and progress to doing them while standing up.

Step 2: Relax the muscles completely for 6 seconds. Repeat this cycle of contractions and relaxations 10 times.

Step 3: Do this set of 10 contractions and relaxations at 3 different times during the day (morning, afternoon and evening).

Step 4: Schedule the times you exercise with activities that you do every day, for example, while brushing your teeth, washing dishes, talking on the phone, watching television or every time you walk through a doorway, so that you remember to do them consistently.

Step 5: Keep on doing them – do not become discouraged. You should start to see results after a few weeks. Like any muscle of the body, the pelvic floor muscles will only stay strong as long as you exercise them.

Kegel Exercises

- **Easy exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles.**
 - **Help reduce or stop accidental urine leakage.**
 - **High success rate.**

Try these exercises on your own. Regular periodic follow-ups with your physician will ensure that you are using the correct muscles. If you find these exercises too difficult to do on your own, you can ask your physician for a referral for professional help with a physiotherapist.

Prepared by :

Cara Tannenbaum, MD, MSc

**Centre de recherche de
l'Institut universitaire de
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KEGEL EXERCISES

THERAPY FOR THE PELVIC FLOOR

