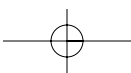
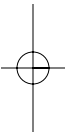
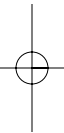
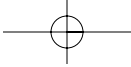
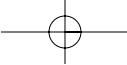


# EXERCISE AND BLADDER RE-TRAINING PROGRAM







# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction ..... p. 5

***EXERCISE PROGRAM ..... p. 7***

Exercises (weeks 1 to 4) ..... p. 7

- Exercise 1 : Increasing muscle strength ..... p. 8
- Exercise 2 : Coordination ..... p. 10
- Exercise 3 : Endurance ..... p. 11

Exercises (weeks 5 to 8) ..... p. 13

- Exercise 1 : Increasing muscle strength ..... p. 14
- Exercise 2 : Coordination ..... p. 15
- Exercise 3 : Endurance ..... p. 16

Exercises (weeks 9 to 12) ..... p. 17

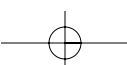
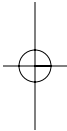
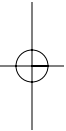
- Exercise 1 : Increasing muscle strength ..... p. 18
- Exercise 2 : Coordination ..... p. 19
- Exercise 3 : Endurance ..... p. 20

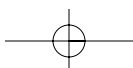
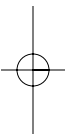
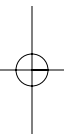
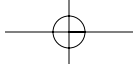
***BLADDER RE-TRAINING PROGRAM ..... p. 21***

The Holding It In Technique ..... p. 22

The Distraction Technique ..... p. 23

Tips on Avoiding Food and Drinks that can irritate Your Bladder .. p. 24





# INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides instructions on how to perform exercises to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles. The techniques and advice provided will help prevent unwanted urine loss. By strengthening the muscles that hold in your urine you will be able to avoid urine leakage and be able to get to the bathroom in time. The bladder re-training techniques will help you suppress strong urges to void. Finally, by eliminating foods and drinks that irritate your bladder, your symptoms will greatly improve.

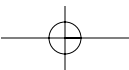
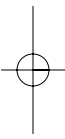
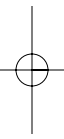
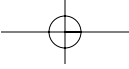
The exercise program (p. 7 to 20) is a 12-week program for everyone with urine leakage. It starts off easy and gets a little more challenging every 4 weeks. You may start as soon as you get this booklet.

The bladder re-training program (p. 21 to 25) is only for people who feel a strong, uncontrolled urge to void. If you have strong urges to void and can't make it to the bathroom in time, then you should also start the bladder re-training program and continue it throughout the entire 12 weeks.

Most people practice the exercise program and the bladder re-training program together during the same time period for more effective results.

These exercises and techniques require patience and motivation. You will learn to perform them properly and consistently. Their success in people up to age 98 should be a strong encouragement to you! Be persistent! We believe in you and we know you can do it!

Good luck!



# EXERCISES

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*(WEEKS 1 to 4)*

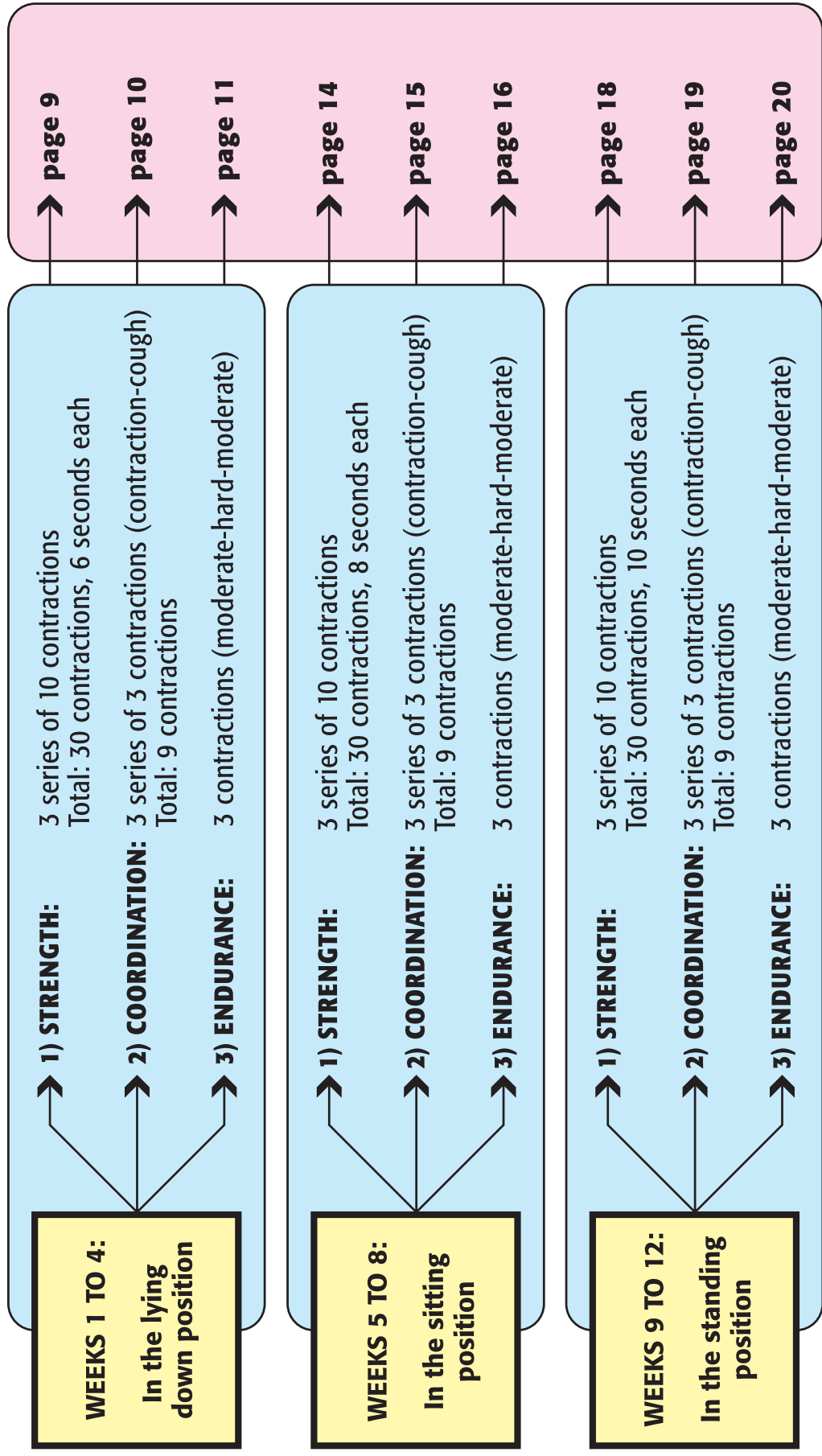
**These 3 types of exercises should be performed every single day. They may seem hard at first, but they will get easier with time and practice. In order to do your exercises each day, pick a fixed time during the day when you know you will have 15 minutes to perform them. Make them part of your daily routine. Check off when you have completed the exercises each day in the calendar provided.**

# 12-WEEK EXERCISE PROGRAM

This is a 12-week exercise program

You have to do all 3 parts each time you perform your exercises (approximately 15 minutes each time)

Check the box in your exercise program when you are finished



 Don't forget your bladder retraining program using the  *Holding It In Technique*, the  *Distraction Technique* and our advice on food and drink (p. 21).

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 1: Increasing muscle strength**

---

- The starting position is lying on your back with your knees bent up, your feet slightly apart and your arms by your sides.
- Breathe out slowly.
- Tighten (squeeze) as hard as you can and draw your pelvic floor muscles up and in, as if you are retaining urine or gas.
- Hold the contraction for 6 seconds. Slowly count to 6 out loud. You can breathe through your nose while counting out loud but try not to let go of the contraction.
- Relax for 12 seconds.

Repeat the above 10 times. This is considered 1 series (10 contractions and relaxations).

Rest for 1 minute, and then repeat the entire series 2 more times. You should do a total of 30 contractions (6 seconds each) each day.

Remember when doing the contractions to relax the muscles in your buttocks and the interior of your thighs as much as possible.

Do not over-do it. If you can't feel your muscles tightening, stop and try again later.

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 2: Coordination**

---

- Use the same starting position as in exercise 1. Lie down with your knees bent.
- Breathe out slowly then contract the pelvic floor muscles as hard as you can, as if you are retaining urine or gas.
- Hold for 1 second then cough vigorously while holding the pelvic floor muscle contraction. Relax.
- Rest for 2 seconds then repeat the contraction, the cough and the relaxation 2 more times.
- Now rest for 30 seconds.

Repeat the above series 2 more times.

Concentrate on relaxing all your other muscles except the pelvic floor muscles.

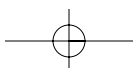
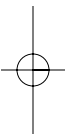
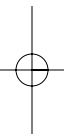
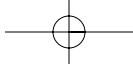
## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 3: Endurance**

- Use the same starting position as in exercise 1. Lie down with your knees bent.
- Breathe out slowly then contract the pelvic floor muscles using moderate strength for 6 seconds.
- Then contract even harder (without letting go) and squeeze as hard as you can for another 6 seconds.
- Now release slightly and contract moderately for a final 6 seconds.
- Release completely and relax for 20 seconds.
- Remember: do not hold your breath.

Repeat the above series 2 more times.

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Mon</b> | <b>Tue</b> | <b>Wed</b> | <b>Thu</b> | <b>Fri</b> | <b>Sat</b> | <b>Sun</b> |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>1</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>2</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>3</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>4</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |



# EXERCISES

---

*(WEEKS 5 to 8)*

**These 3 types of exercises should be performed every single day. They may seem hard at first, but they will gradually get easier as you become more comfortable with your performance. In order to keep track of when you do these exercises, pick a fixed time during the day when you know you will have 15 minutes to perform them. Make them part of your daily routine. Check off when you have completed the exercises each day in the calendar provided.**

You are now ready to progress to the next stage to strengthen your muscles even further. This will be done by exercising in different positions, and by holding the contraction for longer periods of time (to increase your endurance).

The exercises will be performed in the sitting, rather than the lying down position. In order to be as comfortable as possible, find a chair that you like, that has good back support and where your feet touch the ground.

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 1: Increasing muscle strength**

---

- The starting position is sitting up straight with your back well supported in a chair with your feet down.
- Breathe out slowly.
- Tighten (squeeze) as hard as you can and draw your pelvic floor muscles up and in, as if you are retaining urine or gas.
- Hold the contraction for 8 seconds. Count to 8 out loud. You can breathe through your nose while counting out loud but try not to let go of the contraction.
- Relax for 16 seconds.

Repeat the above 10 times. This is considered 1 series (10 contractions and relaxations).

Rest for 1 minute, and then repeat the entire series 2 more times. You should do a total of 30 contractions (8 seconds each) each day.

Remember when doing the contractions to relax the muscles in your buttocks and the interior of your thighs as much as possible.

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 2: Coordination**

---

- Use the same starting position as in Exercise 1. Sit in a chair with your back well supported.
- Breathe out slowly then contract the pelvic floor muscles as hard as you can.
- Hold for 1 second then cough vigorously while holding the pelvic floor muscle contraction. Relax.
- Rest for 2 seconds then repeat the contraction, the cough and the relaxation 2 more times.
- Now rest for 30 seconds.

Repeat the above series 2 more times.

Concentrate on relaxing all your other muscles except the pelvic floor muscles.

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 3: Endurance**

- Use the same starting position as in Exercise 1. Sit in a chair with your back well supported.
- Breathe out slowly then contract the pelvic floor muscles using moderate strength for 8 seconds.
- Then contract even harder (without letting go) and squeeze as hard as you can for another 8 seconds.
- Now release slightly and contract moderately for a final 8 seconds.
- Release completely and relax for 30 seconds.
- Remember: do not hold your breath.

Repeat the above series 2 more times.

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Mon</b> | <b>Tue</b> | <b>Wed</b> | <b>Thu</b> | <b>Fri</b> | <b>Sat</b> | <b>Sun</b> |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>5</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>6</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>7</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>8</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |

# EXERCISES

---

*(WEEKS 9 to 12)*

**These 3 types of exercises should be performed every single day. They may seem hard at first, but they will gradually get easier as you become more comfortable with your performance. In order to keep track of when you do these exercises, pick a fixed time during the day when you know you will have 15 minutes to perform them. Make them part of your daily routine. Check off when you have completed the exercises each day in the calendar provided.**

You are now ready to progress to the standing position! Many people leak urine while they are in the standing position or while they are walking. The goal of exercising so far has been to increase the strength and endurance of your pelvic floor muscles. Now you will apply this technique in order to hold in your urine during real life common situations where you are prone to losing urine, namely while in the standing position.

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 1: Increasing muscle strength**

---

- The starting position is standing up straight with your feet shoulder-width apart. If you have trouble standing for long periods of time, you may stand behind a chair and rest your hands on the top of the chair for support.
- Breathe out slowly.
- Tighten (squeeze) as hard as you can and draw your pelvic floor muscles up and in, as if you are retaining urine or gas.
- Hold the contraction for 10 seconds. Count to 10 out loud. You can breathe through your nose while counting out loud but try not to let go of the contraction.
- Relax for 20 seconds.

Repeat the above 10 times. This is considered 1 series (10 contractions and relaxations).

Rest for 1 minute, and then repeat the entire series 2 more times. You should do a total of 30 contractions (10 seconds each) each day.

Remember when doing the contractions to relax the muscles in your buttocks and the interior of your thighs as much as possible.

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 2: Coordination**

---

- Use the same starting position as in Exercise 1. Stand up straight with your feet shoulder-width apart.
- Breathe out slowly then contract the pelvic floor muscles as hard as you can.
- Hold for 1 second then cough vigorously while holding the pelvic floor muscle contraction. Relax.
- Rest for 2 seconds then repeat the contraction, the cough and the relaxation 2 more times.
- Now rest for 30 seconds.

Repeat the above series 2 more times.

Concentrate on relaxing all your other muscles except the pelvic floor muscles.

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

**Exercise 3: Endurance**

- Use the same starting position as in Exercise 1. Stand up straight with your feet shoulder width apart.
- Breathe out slowly then contract the pelvic floor muscles using moderate strength for 10 seconds.
- Then contract even harder (without letting go) and squeeze as hard as you can for another 10 seconds.
- Now release slightly and contract moderately for a final 10 seconds.
- Release completely and relax for 30 seconds.
- Remember: do not hold your breath.

Repeat the above series 2 more times.

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Mon</b> | <b>Tue</b> | <b>Wed</b> | <b>Thu</b> | <b>Fri</b> | <b>Sat</b> | <b>Sun</b> |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>9</b>    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>10</b>   |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>11</b>   |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| <b>12</b>   |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |

# BLADDER RE-TRAINING PROGRAM

**The bladder re-training program is for people who feel a strong urge to void and cannot make it to the bathroom on time. We provide techniques to suppress the urge to void, and to "re-train" your bladder to wait for longer periods of time before eliminating your urine. There are also tips on what foods and drinks should be avoided if you have a sensitive bladder. The bladder re-training program can be started at the same time as the pelvic floor muscle exercises and must be practiced for at least 12 weeks.**

## **The Holding It In Technique**

When you feel the urge to void, squeeze and try to hold it in for one minute before proceeding to the bathroom. As you are gradually able to hold it in for longer periods of time, try holding for up to 15 minutes when you feel the urge. Do this whenever you feel the urge to void during the course of the day.

These skills will be new to you and your first attempts may not be successful. You may have an accident and therefore it is important that you practice these skills in a safe place, for example at home. With continued practice, you will be able to suppress the urge feeling and not need to go to the washroom. Once you have success you can start to practice urge suppression in more public places.

## **The Distraction Technique**

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Each time you feel that strong urge to urinate, follow these steps:

- a)** Stop what you are doing! Stand still or better yet, sit down.
- b)** Quickly tighten your pelvic floor muscles several times (10 times) or try to maintain a strong contraction for 8 to 10 seconds.
- c)** Relax the rest of your body. Take some deep breaths.
- d)** Distract your mind from your sensation to void by thinking of other things (count backwards from 100, think of a name for a boy or girl beginning with each letter of the alphabet). The mind plays a big part in bladder control.
- e)** To make the urge feeling lessen or disappear you may need to repeat the above steps.

Once you get rid of the urge to go to the bathroom, either walk slowly to the bathroom, or try to wait until the urge returns. If the urge returns, try to get rid of it once again and then go to the bathroom.

When you can easily suppress the urge to void, challenge yourself to wait even longer periods between voids.

## CONFIDENCE AND CONTINENCE

## Tips on Avoiding Food and Drinks that can Irritate Your Bladder

Some foods make a difference in urine leakage. Check your daily food and liquid intake for common bladder irritants. Avoid any that irritate your bladder. The most common bladder irritants are:

- a) Acidic fruits and fruit juices**  
(orange, grapefruit, lemon, mango, and pineapple).
- b) Tomatoes** (tomato juice, red spaghetti sauce, pizza sauce, barbecue sauce, Chili)
- c) Spicy foods**  
(Mexican, Thai, Indian, Cajun)
- d) Caffeine and alcohol**  
(coffee, tea, cola, chocolate).

Caffeine is both a bladder irritant and a diuretic. Replace caffeine intake with healthy alternatives such as a warm glass of milk, water with lemon, cranberry juice or a cup of soup.

Try to eliminate these irritants completely from your diet for a week or two and see if you improve.



# *Congratulations!*



**YOU HAVE DONE A GREAT JOB!**

**CONTINUE THESE HABITS AND CONTINUE TO DO  
YOUR EXERCICES!**

*Notes*

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