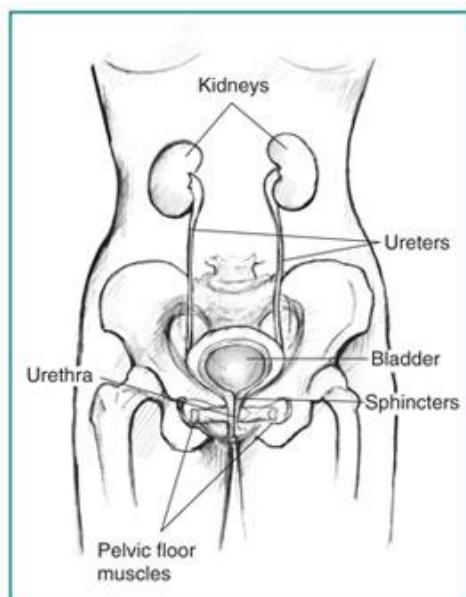


STRENGTHENING YOUR PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES

By: Urology Care Foundation | Posted on: 20 Apr 2015 (leakage)

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Millions suffer from urinary incontinence (urine leakage). Often people feel as if their bladders control their lives. You can take some steps to help control your bladder.



When the bladder fills, the bladder muscles should be relaxed and the muscles around the urethra (the tube that urine passes through), called the pelvic floor muscles, should be tight. Exercises that strengthen these muscles

can help prevent leakage and calm the urge to go. These are commonly called "Kegel" exercises, named after the doctor who developed them. They can help keep your pelvic floor muscles toned and may reduce your problems with leakage or frequent urges to urinate.

What Should Kegel Exercise

Feel Like?

Imagine you are in a crowded room and feel as if you are going to pass gas or "wind." Most of us will try to squeeze the muscles of our anus to prevent the passing of gas. The muscles you squeeze are the pelvic floor muscles. Women will feel a slight pulling in the rectum and

Strengthen your Pelvic Floor Muscles

Once you locate your pelvic floor muscles you are ready to begin. The exercise involves squeezing then relaxing your pelvic floor muscles. Squeeze the muscles for five seconds and then relax the muscles for five seconds. Be sure to take the time to relax between squeezes so that your muscles can rest before squeezing again. Each squeeze and relax counts as one repetition.

Each set of exercises should include three different positions: 10 repetitions lying down, 10 sitting, and 10 standing. Do one set in the morning and one set at night (or at least twice a day).

Control Your Pelvic Floor Muscles.

It may take some practice to learn to control your pelvic floor muscles. When doing the exercises, relax your body as much as possible and concentrate on your pelvic floor muscles. To avoid using your stomach muscles, rest your hand lightly on your belly as you squeeze your pelvic floor muscles. Be sure that you do not feel any movement of your stomach. Do not hold your breath.

To test whether you are tightening the wrong muscles, squeeze your pelvic floor muscles while sitting in front of a mirror. If you see that your body is moving up and down slightly, you are also using your buttocks or thigh muscles. When done properly, no one should be able to tell that you are squeezing your pelvic floor muscles - except for you.

How Often Should I Exercise?

Do your exercises often enough to make them a habit but at a minimum of 30 repetitions twice a day. Pelvic floor muscle support usually improves within 6 weeks after starting the exercises. Strengthening your pelvic floor is one step you can take to control your bladder. While incontinence and frequent sudden urges to go may be embarrassing to talk about, your health care provider can offer other treatment options that may provide further relief.

