



Pelvic Floor Exercises (Kegel)

UHN

For men who want to strengthen their pelvic floor muscles

This pamphlet covers:

- How to find your pelvic floor muscles
- How to do pelvic floor exercises
- What to remember if you are having surgery

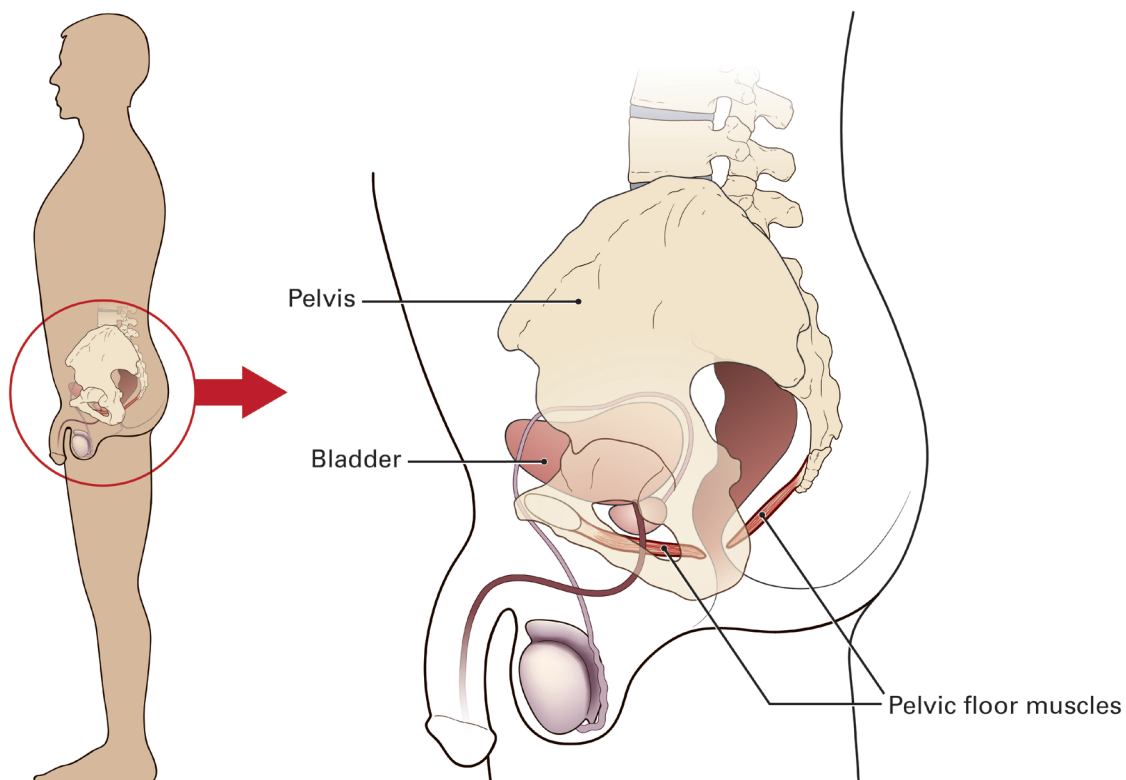
Health care professionals have been prescribing pelvic floor exercises (often called Kegel exercises) for years to treat urinary stress incontinence.

Where are the pelvic floor muscles?

The pelvic muscles surround the internal sex organs. They contract and relax as one muscle.

When you do pelvic floor exercises you are using all these muscles that support the pelvic floor.

In everyday life you don't use these muscles a lot unless you have the urge to pee and you can't find a bathroom or when you have an orgasm.



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Pelvic floor exercises strengthen your pelvic floor muscles and may help you to:

- decrease stress incontinence
- have more intense orgasms
- improve erectile dysfunction (because of venous leakage that may happen after pelvic surgery)
- increase blood flow in your pelvic area

How do I find the pelvic floor muscles?

One of the hardest parts of doing the exercise is finding the pelvic muscle.

1. First find your pelvic floor muscles by:

- **Stopping your urine flow midstream.**

The muscles that you contract when you do this are the same muscles that you tighten to do pelvic floor exercises.

Do not make a habit of starting and stopping your urine stream.

Doing these exercises with a full bladder or while urinating can actually make the muscles weaker. It can also lead to incomplete emptying of the bladder that may increase your chance of getting a urinary tract infection.

2. Once you find the pelvic muscles, **tighten them as much as you can.**

- This should feel as though everything is being lifted upward.
- To get the most benefit, focus on tightening only your pelvic floor muscles. **You should NOT be tightening your abdominal or thigh muscles.**
- Try not to hold your breath. Just relax as you tighten the muscles.

Remember:



- **To get results, spend time and energy.**

The more time you spend doing the exercises the stronger the muscle becomes. A few excellent contractions are much better than many small attempts.

- Like other exercises, doing too much may cause you to feel discomfort and pain and can make the muscles too tired. Ease your way into doing the exercises.

How to do pelvic floor exercises:

- Stand, lie down or sit to do the exercises.
- Tighten your pelvic floor muscles for 2 to 5 seconds. Then increase to 7 to 10 seconds.
- Hold the muscles as tightly as you can.
- Slowly release the muscles.

Repeat 10 to 20 times, 3 times a day (morning, afternoon and night).

Over time, try repeating 40 to 50 times, 3 times a day (morning, afternoon and night).

When do I start pelvic floor exercises?

Muscles usually get tired later in the day so starting them earlier in the day may work better for you.

If you are having surgery:

- Start the exercises before your surgery.
- To lower the chance of urine dribbling after surgery, try to tighten the pelvic muscles **before** you stand up, cough, sneeze or bend over.
- Do NOT do the Kegel exercises when a Foley catheter is in place. This may cause bladder spasms and bleeding. Restart pelvic floor exercises after the catheter is removed.

Questions?

If you have any questions speak to your doctor or health care provider.

Notes

