

KEGEL EXERCISES

Kegel (“kay-gul”) exercises are done to strengthen the pubococcygeus (PC) muscles, which support the organs of the pelvis. These exercises help prevent weakening which would allow sagging of the bladder, vagina, uterus, and rectum.

BENEFITS OF KEEPING THESE MUSCLES STRONG THROUGH KEGEL EXERCISES

- ❖ Less problems with uncontrolled leakage of urine
- ❖ Less discomfort during pelvic examinations
- ❖ Better pelvic support during pregnancy and during labor; may reduce the number of stitches required after delivery
- ❖ Greater enjoyment of sexual intercourse for both you and your partner

How To Do Kegel Exercises:

1. Find the PC muscles. The first time you try Kegel exercises you need to identify the PC muscles. To do this, sit on the toilet with your legs apart, urinate a small amount and then slow or stop the flow of urine without closing your legs or squeezing your buttock. The muscles in the pelvic floor that stop the flow of urine are the PC muscles. **NOTE:** Starting and stopping the flow of urine is not recommended once you can feel where the PC muscles are. Therefore, do not repeat this step once you understand where these muscles are.
2. After you have found the PC muscles, you will be able to begin the exercises below. A variety of exercises are described, which allow you to do different exercises throughout the day. To be effective, Kegel exercises need to be done frequently and are most effective when practiced several times a day. Many women do Kegel exercises while driving in the car, doing several exercises at red lights, while watching TV, or doing a set of exercises commercials. Some women do them on the telephone or when they wake up in the morning.
3. Exercises:
 - A. Basic Exercises:
 - Squeeze the PC muscles for a count of three seconds. Relax the PC muscles for a count of three seconds.
 - Repeat this squeeze for three seconds/relax for three seconds. Do this 10 times.
 - Try to do the above set of 10 squeeze/relax exercises several times a day.
 - As you improve, gradually increase the length of time for your squeeze and relax until you can hold a squeeze for 10 seconds, relax for 10 seconds and repeat 10 times.
 - B. The “Tampon” Exercise:
 - Imagine there is a tampon at the opening of your vagina.
 - Using the PC muscles, try to suck the tampon up into your vagina. Hold for 2 seconds and then relax.

- Try to repeat this several times a day.
- C. The “Elevator” Exercise: This is the usual vaginal muscle tone known as the “ground floor”
- Tighten the PC muscles to go to the “first floor”.
 - Gradually continue to tighten until you have reached the “highest floor” you can. (With practice you will reach “higher floors”.)
 - Slowly relax the muscles until you feel you are back to the “ground floor”.
 - Push down slightly to feel the muscles go to the “basement”.
 - Stop pushing and withdraw.
 - Do this exercise once a day.
- D. The “Flutter” Exercise:
- Squeeze and release, squeeze and release, several times as fast as you can.
 - This exercise may be repeated 10 times a day.