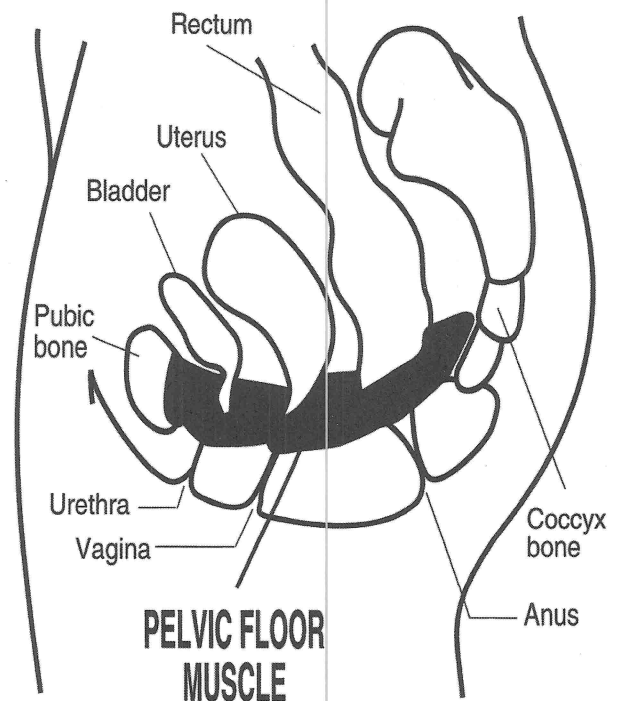
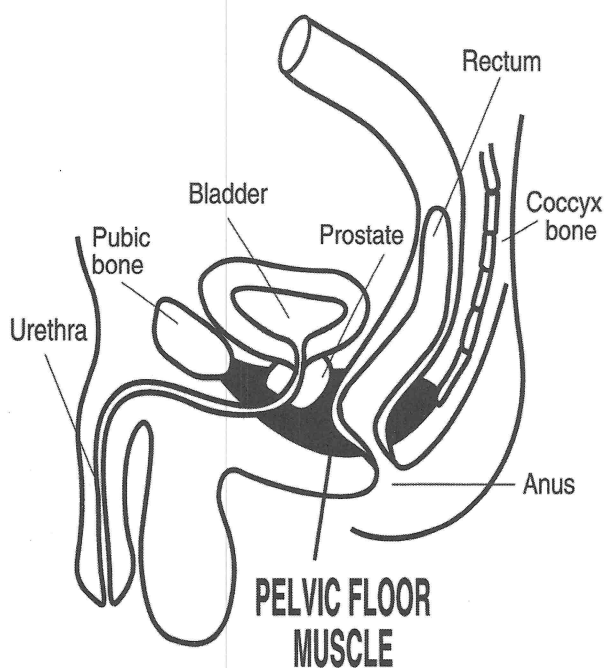


How to Do Pelvic Muscle Exercises

1. **WHAT IS THE PELVIC MUSCLE?** - Your pelvic muscle provides support to your bladder, and rectum and, in women, the vagina and the uterus. If it weakens, it cannot support these organs and their position can change. This change in position can cause problems with normal function. Keeping the muscle strong can help prevent unwanted urine leakage.
2. **FINDING THE PELVIC MUSCLE** - Without tensing the muscles of your leg, buttocks or abdomen, imagine that you are trying to control the passing of gas or pinching off a stool. Or imagine you are in an elevator full of people and you feel the urge to pass gas. What do you do? You tighten or pull in the ring of muscle around your rectum - your pelvic muscle. You should feel a lifting sensation in the area around the vagina or a pulling in of your rectum.



3. **EXERCISE REGIMEN**- One exercise (**Kegels**) consists of both “tightening and relaxing” the muscle. It is equally important to control when your muscle tightens and relaxes. Be sure to relax completely between each muscle tightening.
4. **TYPES OF EXERCISES** There are 2 type of muscle contractions you will need to practice – **Short** (2 second) or **Quick** contractions and **Slow** (3 or 5 or 10 second) or **long** contractions. To do the short or quick muscle contractions, contract or tighten your pelvic muscle quickly and hard, and immediately relax it. For the slow or long (sustained) contractions, contract or tighten your pelvic muscle and hold for a count of (3 or 5 or 10 as prescribed) seconds, then relax the muscle completely for the same amount of time.
5. **WHERE TO PRACTICE**- These exercises can be practiced anywhere and anytime. You can do the exercises in these positions:

How to Do Pelvic Muscle Exercises

- **Lying Down** - Lie on your back, flat or with your head on a pillow, knees bent and feet slightly apart. It is helpful to support your knees with a pillow.
 - **Sitting** - Sit upright in a firm seat and straight-back chair, knees slightly apart, feet flat on the floor or legs stretched out in front and crossed at the ankles.
 - **Standing** - Stand by a chair, knees slightly bent with feet shoulder width apart and toes slightly pointed outward. You can also lean on the kitchen counter with your hips flexed.
- 6. TIMES TO USE THE MUSCLE** - If you experience urine loss in one specific position only, like when you stand, then follow these steps:
- Increase the number of exercises for that position only, or
 - Add additional exercises per day with focus on doing all the exercises in that position only.
- 7. COMMON MISTAKES** -
- Concentrate and tighten only the pelvic floor muscle. **DO NOT** tighten thighs, buttocks or stomach. If you feel your stomach move, then you are also using these muscles.
 - **DO NOT** hold your breath. Breathe normally and/or count out loud.
- 8. CAN THEY BE HARMFUL?** No, these exercises cannot harm you in any way. You should find them easy and relaxing. If you get back or stomach pain after you exercise, you are probably trying too hard and using your stomach muscles. If you experience headaches, then you are also tensing your chest muscles and probably holding your breath.
- 9. WHEN WILL I SEE A CHANGE?** After 4 to 6 weeks of daily exercise, you will begin to notice less urine leakage. Make the exercises part of your daily lifestyle. Tighten the muscle when you walk, as you stand up, and on the way to the bathroom.

Reference:

Newman DK, Wein AJ. *Overcoming Overactive Bladder: Your Complete Self-Care Guide*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications; 2004.

EXERCISE PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM

NAME _____

DATE: _____

Please complete the following exercises:

1. **SHORT QUICK EXERCISE**

CONTRACT THE MUSCLE FOR 2 – 3
SECONDS AND IMMEDIATELY RELAX.

2. **LONG SUSTAINED EXERCISE:**

CONTRACT THE MUSCLE, AND HOLD
THE CONTRACTION A COUNT OF _____.

THEN IMMEDIATELY RELAX FOR A
COUNT OF _____.

3. BE SURE TO REST YOUR MUSCLE
AFTER EACH MUSCLE CONTRACTION
FOR THE SAME LENGTH OF THE
CONTRACTION OR LONGER.

4. WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED BOTH
TYPES OF EXERCISES IN ALL 3
POSITIONS, YOU WILL HAVE
COMPLETED ONE SESSION.

5. BE SURE TO MAINTAIN YOUR VOIDING
INTERVAL SCHEDULE.

EXERCISE SESSION		
Lying Down		
Do _____ exercises:	_____ seconds	SHORT/QUICK
Do _____ exercises:	_____ seconds	LONG
Sitting		
Do _____ exercises:	_____ seconds	SHORT/QUICK
Do _____ exercises:	_____ seconds	LONG
Standing		
Do _____ exercises:	_____ seconds	SHORT/QUICK
Do _____ exercises:	_____ seconds	LONG

Do _____ exercise sessions per day

Which total = _____ exercises everyday.

Go to the bathroom every _____ hours during the day.

Go to the bathroom every _____ minutes during the day.

SPECIAL TIPS:

- ALWAYS EMPTY YOUR BLADDER PRIOR TO BEGINNING YOUR EXERCISE SESSION.
- COUNT OUT LOUD WITH SUSTAINED OR LONG EXERCISES; REMEMBER TO KEEP BREATHING!
- KEEP YOUR STOMACH, LEG AND BUTTOCK MUSCLES RELAXED. REST YOUR HAND ON YOUR STOMACH, IT SHOULD NOT MOVE OR TENSE.
- IF IT HELPS, TAKE A DEEP BREATH BETWEEN EACH EXERCISE TO HELP YOU KEEP OTHER MUSCLES RELAXED.

Reference: Newman DK, Wein AJ. *Overcoming Overactive Bladder: Your Complete Self-Care Guide*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications; 2004.

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____