

Pelvic Floor Exercises

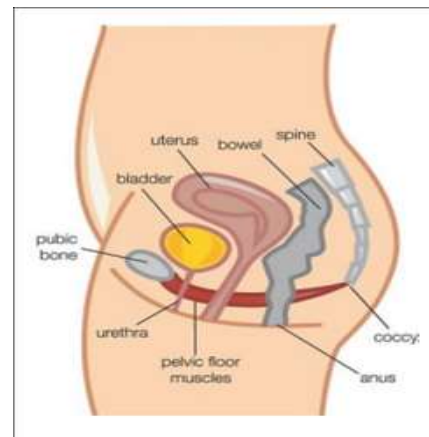
Information for patients

Pelvic floor exercises are important to help you avoid prolapse and leakage of urine, wind or stool from your bladder or bowel. This leaflet should help you develop a regular habit working these important muscles. It might take a little practice to feel the muscles working. However, if you are struggling or worry that you might not be getting it right, talk to your physiotherapist.

Position

Get comfortable in a position that helps you to feel your pelvic floor muscles, this could be:

- Lying with your knees bent
- Sitting on a chair, feet flat, legs slightly apart
- Standing



Pelvic floor muscle contraction or exercise

- Think about your anus and squeeze it up without clenching your buttocks.
- At the same time try to tighten your vaginal muscles, think upwards and in.
- Hold the muscles tight then release. Try to feel the letting-go of muscles as you release.

- When exercising your pelvic muscles you should be relaxed and not hold your breath or hold other muscles tight. Concentrate on the vaginal muscles.
- Pelvic floor exercises should include long squeezes as well as short, quick squeezes; ensuring that you let the muscle 'go' or 'relax' after each squeeze.

Long squeezes

Tighten your pelvic floor muscles and hold them up for 5 seconds, then release and let them fully relax. Rest for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

Short squeezes

- Quickly tighten your pelvic floor muscles, then immediately let them go again. Repeat 5 times. Always let the muscles fully relax after each squeeze.
- Aim to be able to do 10 long squeezes, holding each squeeze for 10 seconds, followed by 10 short squeezes. Aim to do this 3 times each day.

Remembering to exercise

Try to make your exercises part of a daily routine, doing them at the same time as e.g. brushing your teeth or making a hot drink. You might also write a note on the fridge, put a reminder on your phone, or use the 'Squeezy app'.

<https://www.squeezyapp.com/>

You can also do it after emptying your bladder, while sitting on the toilet (but don't practice by stopping your urine flow).

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.