

Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises for Men

Pelvic floor muscle exercises, used to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles, have been called Kegel exercises in the past because they were first developed by Dr. Arnold Kegel in the 1940s. Since that time, using these exercises for pelvic floor physical therapy has grown into a very complex and important field for nursing and physical therapists.

What Exactly are Pelvic Floor Muscles?

The pelvic floor muscles are there to provide support to your bladder and rectum. If they weaken, they cannot support these organs. If you had your prostate removed, the surgery changes the function of the urinary sphincter and doing these exercises can add additional support and increase your chance of regaining urinary continence (or control of the leakage). These exercises work very well for bowel urgency and incontinence too.

To perform a pelvic floor muscle exercise, you must locate your pelvic floor muscles. To do this, act like you are trying to control the passing of gas or pinching off stool. This causes you to tighten or pull in the ring of muscle around your rectum and scrotum – your pelvic floor muscles. Doing this, you should feel a lifting sensation in the area of your rectum, scrotum, and/or penis. You should not be tensing the muscles in your legs, abdomen (stomach), or buttocks. Pelvic floor muscles should be done in regiments like any other exercise. One exercise consists of tightening and relaxing the muscle. It is very important that you are always able to control these muscles to do a pelvic floor muscle exercise. It is also important to completely relax between each exercise.

Two Types of Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises You Can Do:

- Short/quick contractions: Contract or tighten your pelvic floor muscle quickly and hard, then immediately relax it completely.

- Slow/long contractions: Contract or tighten your pelvic floor muscle and hold for a count of 3, 5, or 10 seconds as prescribed, then relax your muscle completely for the same amount of time.

You Can Practice These Exercises Anywhere at Any Time in These Positions:

- Lying down: Lie flat on your back with or without a pillow for comfort and bend your knees with feet slightly apart.
- Sitting: Sit upright in a firm seat and straight back chair, knees slightly apart, with feet flat on the floor or legs stretched out in front and crossed at the ankles.

If you Experience Urine Loss in One Specific Position Only, Like Standing:

Increase the number of exercises in that position only or add additional exercises per day with focus on doing all the exercises in that position only.

While Doing Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises, There are Some Common Mistakes People Will Make. Here are Some Reminders:

- Focus on only tightening the pelvic floor muscle. **DO NOT** tighten or contract your thighs, abdomen, or buttocks. If you feel your legs or stomach move, you are using these muscles.
- Breathe normally and/or count out loud. **DO NOT** hold your breath.

If you are doing these exercises correct, you should feel calm and relaxed. If you are experiencing back or stomach pain after you do these, you might be using your stomach muscles. Also, if you experience headaches, you might be using your chest muscles and/or holding your breath. These exercises have shown to have results after 4-6 weeks of daily exercise. You might notice that urine incontinence or leakage have decreased. It is best to make these exercises part of your daily routine.