

Pelvic Floor Dysfunction Exercises Handout

Pelvic floor exercises, commonly known as Kegels, are designed to strengthen the muscles supporting the bladder, uterus, and rectum. Regular practice of these exercises can alleviate symptoms of pelvic floor dysfunction, such as urinary incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, and pain during intercourse.

Finding your pelvic floor muscles

Pretend you are trying to stop the flow of urine or prevent passing gas. The muscles you squeeze are your pelvic floor muscles.

- **Women:** Insert a finger into your vagina and tighten the muscles around it. You should feel the muscles contract and lift up.
- **Men:** Tighten the muscles around your anus as if trying not to pass gas. You should feel the muscles lift up.

Pelvic floor exercise

- Empty your bladder before starting.
- Tighten your pelvic floor muscles, hold for 5-10 seconds, then relax for 5-10 seconds.
- Repeat 10-15 times, 2-3 times per day.
- Breathe normally and avoid tightening your abdominal, thigh, or buttock muscles.
- Gradually increase the hold time and number of repetitions as your muscles get stronger.

Additional comments

Other pelvic floor exercises

Quick flicks (Fast twitch contractions)

- Quickly contract and relax your pelvic floor muscles 10-20 times in a row.
- Rest for 5-10 seconds.
- Repeat 2-3 sets, 2-3 times per day.
- This exercise helps your muscles react quickly to sudden stresses like coughing or sneezing.

Bridge

- Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
- Tighten your pelvic floor muscles and lift your buttocks off the ground.
- Hold for 5-10 seconds, then slowly lower down.
- Repeat 10-15 times, 2-3 times per day.

Squats

- Stand with feet hip-width apart.
- Tighten your pelvic floor muscles as you lower into a squat position.
- Hold for 5-10 seconds, then return to standing.
- Repeat 10-15 times, 2-3 times per day.

Diaphragmatic breathing

- Lie on your back with knees bent and one hand on your chest and the other on your belly.
- Breathe in deeply through your nose, allowing your belly to rise.
- Exhale slowly through pursed lips, feeling your belly fall.
- Focus on relaxing your pelvic floor muscles as you breathe.
- Repeat for 5-10 minutes, 2-3 times per day.

Bird dog

- Start on hands and knees.
- Tighten the pelvic floor muscles and slowly extend the opposite arm and leg straight.
- Hold for 5-10 seconds, then release.
- Repeat 10-15 times on each side.