

KEGEL EXERCISES

An important part of an Overactive Bladder Program

Your doctor has just prescribed medication for your Overactive Bladder. An additional way you can help reduce the number of leaking accidents you have is to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles, the muscles that hold your bladder, bowel, and (if you are a woman) uterus in place. To do this, you'll need to get in the habit of doing some simple floor exercises, called Kegels.¹

Step 1:

FINDING THE RIGHT MUSCLE

Before you can do Kegel exercises, you have to find the right muscles to squeeze. Use the following guide to help you.

- First of all, sit down.
- Now, squeeze the muscles you would use to stop the flow of urine or a bowel movement.
- If you are a woman, you can confirm that these are the right muscles by lying down, putting a finger inside your vagina, and squeezing. When you feel pressure around your finger, you know you are using the correct muscle.
- If you are a man, you can tell you are squeezing the right muscle if you feel your penis pull in slightly toward your body.

Step 2:

DOING YOUR KEGELS

Now that you know what muscle to squeeze, you can begin doing your Kegels. Here's how.

- Stand, sit, or lie down with your knees slightly apart.

- Squeeze your pelvic muscles (the ones you located previously), as if you were trying to hold in some urine or gas.
- Hold that squeeze for about 5 seconds.
- Relax the muscles for about 5 seconds.
- Each repeat of squeezing and relaxing is one repetition.
- Try working your way up to doing 4 or 5 sets of 10 to 15 repetitions per set.

Step 3:

WORKING KEGELS INTO YOUR DAILY LIFE

At first, it may seem difficult to find the time to do these exercises. If so, don't worry. Like all new routines, you just have to get into the habit of doing them. And that's just a matter of building these exercises into your regular daily schedule.

Many people, for example, prefer to do their Kegels just before they get dressed in the morning and 5 minutes before bedtime. Of course, once you get used to them, you can try adding some quick Kegels while you do other activities, like working at your desk, ironing, watching TV, etc. These mini-exercises are done by quickly tightening and relaxing your pelvic muscles 10 times.

Remember, the more you do your Kegel exercises, the stronger your pelvic floor muscles will become. So do your Kegels regularly, trying to add a few quick ones in, if possible.

Reference:

1. Health Canada. Seniors Info Exchange. Volume 8, Number 1, 1999. p.1-18.



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MY URINARY DIARY

No. of pads I used today _____

The shortest time between voids:

☐ Less than 1 hour ☐ More than 1 hour

Daily comments: _____

No. of pads I used today _____

The shortest time between voids:

☐ Less than 1 hour ☐ More than 1 hour

Daily comments: _____

No. of pads I used today _____

The shortest time between voids:

☐ Less than 1 hour ☐ More than 1 hour

Daily comments: _____