

KEGEL EXERCISES

1. Identify the correct muscles to contract
 - a. Place a finger in the vagina and squeeze the muscles around your finger. Do not use the muscles of the buttocks, abdomen or thighs.
 - b. Or while urinating, try to stop the flow of urine. This is not the best place to practice but it is useful to figure out if you are using the correct muscles.
2. When your muscles are weak to start with it is best to do these while lying down. As the muscles get stronger, the exercises may be done while sitting or standing.
3. Contract or hold your muscles as if you were stopping your urine stream but do it when you are not urinating.
 - a. Hold the muscle contraction as long as possible the goal is to hold it for 5-8 seconds and relax for the same amount of time in between each contraction. The relaxation part is as important as the contraction. When you start this you may only be able to hold it for very a very short time and that is ok. It will get easier as your muscles get stronger.
4. How many to do: Do 10 contractions followed by relaxation (1 set) at least 3 times daily. A minimum of 3-4 times weekly for at least 15-20 weeks is needed to begin to see improvement.
5. Kegels can be done anytime anywhere. It is helpful to do them with an activity you do regularly like flossing your teeth, talking on the phone or during television commercials.
6. Tighten your pelvic floor muscles during activities that can cause urine leakage like physical exercise, lifting, coughing or sneezing.