



Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises for Men



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Kegel or Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises for Men

Prostate cancer surgery or radiation treatment can weaken the muscles around your bladder. When this happens, you may start to have problems with urinary incontinence or a lack of bladder control. These are characterized by the leaking or passing of urine on accident.

Pelvic floor muscles can be made weaker by:

- Surgery for bladder or bowel problems
- Constipation
- Being overweight
- Heavy lifting
- Long-term coughing (such as smoker's cough, bronchitis, or asthma)
- Being unfit

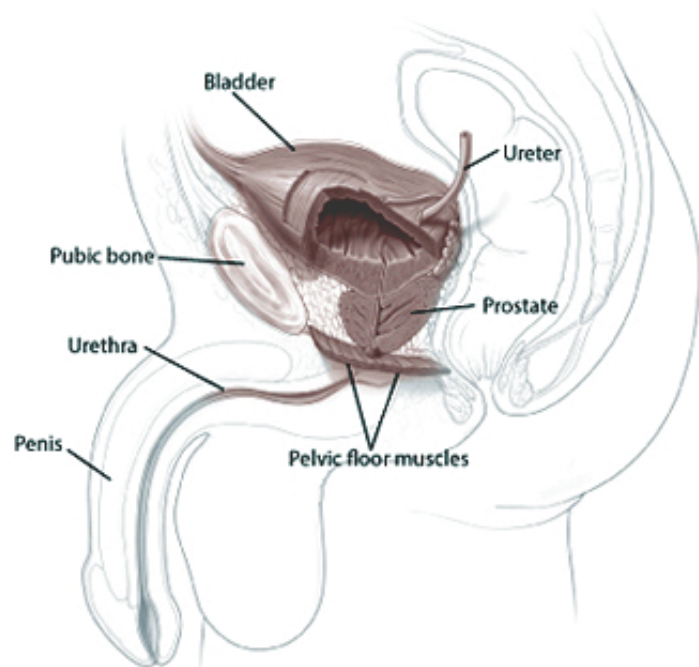
Kegels, or pelvic floor muscle exercises, can help strengthen the muscles to regain your control or prepare for pelvic surgery.

What are the pelvic floor muscles?

The pelvic floor is made up of layers of muscle and other tissue that stretch like a hammock from the tailbone, forward to the pubic bone.

A man's pelvic floor muscles support his bladder and bowel (colon) while allowing the urine tube (urethra) and rectum to pass through.

Your pelvic floor muscles help you to control your bladder, bowel, and sexual function. In order to maintain control after surgery or radiation treatment, it is vital to keep your pelvic floor muscles strong.



How do I find the right muscles?

To find the right muscles, try the following:

- The next time you urinate, try to start and stop your urine stream. This will help you find the correct muscles.
- Do not tighten your buttocks or thigh muscles when doing these exercises.
- Relax your stomach muscles as much as possible.
- When you are standing and squeeze your pelvic floor muscles, you should see your penis move slightly.

What are the steps to do these exercises?

1. Sit or lie down with the muscles of your thighs and buttocks relaxed. It may be helpful to use a hand mirror to watch your pelvic floor muscles.
2. Squeeze the pelvic floor muscles and hold for a count of five (5), then relax for a count of five (5).
3. Do not squeeze your buttocks or bear down
4. You should feel a distinct “squeeze and lift” if done correctly.
5. Work up to doing the exercises five (5) times a day in sets of 10 (50 total per day).

Note: At first, you may not be able to hold the squeeze for 1 to 2 seconds, but you should aim for 5 as your muscles get stronger.

Do your Kegel exercises well.

Fewer good squeezes are better than a lot of half-hearted ones.

If you are not sure that you are doing the squeezes right, or if you do not see a change in symptoms after 3 months, contact your doctor’s office asking how to for help.

Where can I do these exercises?

When you first start doing the exercises, find a place where you can do them without being interrupted. After you have done them for a while, you can practice the exercises anytime and anywhere (e.g. watching TV, standing in line, driving a car, etc.)

Note: It often takes 6 to 12 weeks to see results, if you do these exercises regularly.

Things you can do to help your pelvic floor muscles:

After a surgery, always squeeze your pelvic floor muscles when you:

- Sit up from lying down
- Stand up from a sitting position
- Lift something heavy

Remember to:

- Keep breathing while doing the exercises
- Only squeeze and lift
- Do ***NOT*** tighten your buttocks
- Keep your thighs relaxed
- Don't strain when using your bowels
- Eat fruit and vegetables
- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water daily
- Keep your weight within the right range for your height and age

Are there any precautions?

Do not perform the exercises too much.

Do not do more than 100 Kegel's in one day, as this can tire out the muscles and make you leak more. Start slow and gradually increase the amount of exercise.

Remember to breathe during the exercises. Holding your breath may put extra pressure on your pelvic muscles.

****This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.****