



Regional Urology

Kegel Exercises for Urinary Incontinence

What are Kegel exercises?

Kegel exercises help strengthen your bladder, which will reduce your chances of having urinary incontinence after surgery. As a result, it is important to perform these exercises regularly before your surgery.

How do I find my pelvic muscle?

To find the pelvic muscle, begin to urinate. In the middle of urinating, stop the flow of urine. The muscle you use to stop the flow of urine is the same muscle you will be exercising.

How do I exercise the pelvic muscle?

Begin by emptying your bladder. Then, try to relax completely. Tighten the muscle and hold back for a count of 10 (10 seconds). Next, relax the muscle completely for 10 seconds. You should feel a pulling sensation around your rectum.

When should I exercise?

Please perform the exercise 10 times every hour for 10 hours a day (100 times a day). Remember to hold the exercise for 10 seconds. Your muscle may start to tire after six or eight exercises. If this happens, stop and resume the exercise later in the day. Discontinue Kegel exercises while your catheter is in place. Immediately resume Kegel exercises once your catheter is removed.

Common mistakes

Never use your stomach, legs or buttock muscles. To find out if you are contracting your stomach muscles, place your hand on your abdomen while you squeeze your pelvic muscle. If you feel your abdomen move, then you are using these muscles as well, which you should not do. In time, you will learn to practice effortlessly. Eventually, work these exercises in as part of your lifestyle—tighten the muscle when you walk, before you sneeze, as you stand up and on the way to the bathroom.

Many products are available for urinary incontinence. Try a pharmacy first for products such as Depend or Depend briefs. A medical supply store may have products that are more comfortable, but they also may be more expensive.