



KEGELS

MALE PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISES

WHAT IS A KEGEL?

- Pelvic Floor Exercises that can help prevent urine leakage as well as fecal incontinence

3 STEPS TO DO AN EFFECTIVE KEGEL

1. Squeeze muscles around the urethra—as though you are stopping the flow of urine
2. Tighten and elevate muscles between the anus and scrotum. Note: When steps 1 and 2 are performed correctly you should feel muscles being lightly tightened around the anus)
3. Combine steps 1 and 2

A DETAILED EXPLANATION OF HOW TO DO KEGEL EXERCISES.

Step 1—The Urethra & Functional Stop Test

- Begin urinating and partially empty the bladder. Stop the flow of urine in a slow controlled manner. Note how this feels.

Step 2—The Pelvic Floor

- Place one or two fingers on the area between the anus and the scrotum. Lightly tighten that area (the perineum). You should feel this area become firm on your finger(s). It may be helpful to think of lifting the scrotum or penis using the muscles of the perineal area.

Step 3—Putting it all Together

- Standing in front of a mirror, you should see your penis and scrotum slightly lift when you are performing the exercise correctly.

Initially, it will be easiest to perform the exercise in a lying or reclining position with sitting being the next easiest position in which to perform the exercise. Practice using the pelvic floor muscles as in steps 1 and 2 until you can do these exercises in different settings or positions throughout the day.

KEGELS—HOW LONG AND HOW MANY?

- When starting out, it is common to find that you can only hold the contraction for 3-5 seconds and can only complete 4-6 repetitions before fatiguing. This usually means that you are completing the exercise properly. If you find that you are able to hold the contraction for 15 seconds or longer, RECHECK. It is unusual to be able to hold the contraction for that length of time when you first start doing the exercises. It is especially true if those muscles start out weak. Some individuals may only be able to hold 1-2 seconds. Start where you are at. There must always be at least a 30 second rest period between repetitions or you will over fatigue and see no progress.
- You should generally try to get up to 12 to 15 repetitions per day by the end of your first week of doing the exercise. Ultimately, 20 to 25 repetitions per day are adequate for achieving complete control. There is no absolute right number. Some men may do well with fewer repetitions and some may need more.

NOTE: it is also helpful to do the exercise when performing activities that require effort such as lifting or starting a lawn mower.

PROBLEM SOLVERS (IN CASE OF FAILER TO IMPROVE)

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- REMEMBER: there must always be at least 30 seconds of rest between repetitions of the exercise or over fatiguing will occur and improvements will not be seen.

Too many repetitions at a time causes over fatiguing and failure to progress. The daily exercises can't be performed all at one time. When starting out, 6 or 7 at a time is usually all that can be done before the muscles become fatigued. In the long term, no more than 10 should be performed at a session.

- Remember that these exercises must be performed with a light to moderate effort or you will actually find you are substituting other muscle groups such as the buttocks, thighs or abdominal muscles. When performed properly, you should only feel the effort in the perineal area (between the scrotum and the anus) and in the genitals.
- To be successful, a strategy for doing enough repetitions and spacing them throughout the day may be needed. For example:
 - for an office worker, it may work well to perform one kegel each time he logs in or out of his computer.
 - for a truck driver, doing one exercise each time he stops for a red light might work well...The exercises need to be spread throughout the day to be successful.
- These exercises are for life. Stopping them will lead to the gradual return of urine leakage.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- Kegels exercises can be important following bladder, prostate, or pelvic floor surgeries because they can contribute to significant pelvic floor weakness and/or loss of control. The addition of Kegels following such surgeries usually prevent the return of deficits over the long term.