

KEGEL'S EXERCISES

Using the PC Muscle:

A muscle that surrounds the vagina is called the PC muscle. It is usually in good tone, but can get loose with childbirth, sitting a lot and age. Some of the signs that it may not be in good tone is if you lose a little urine when you cough or sneeze and if you cannot stop the flow of urine while urinating. It can be “toned up” by doing Kegel exercises regularly (i.e. every day).

How to Find the PC Muscle:

Sit on the toilet. Spread your legs apart. See if you can stop and start the flow of urine without moving your legs. That's your PC muscle. The one that turns the urine flow on and off. If you don't find it the first time, don't give up – try again the next time you have to urinate. Do not do this test every time you void.

The Kegel Exercises:

Quick Kegels – Tighten and relax the PC muscle as rapidly as you can five times, then relax.

Slow Kegels – Tighten the PC muscle as you did to stop the urine. Hold it for a slow count of three, then relax.

Pull in/Push out – Pull up the entire pelvic floor as though trying to suck water into your vagina. Then push out or bear down as if trying to push the imaginary water out. This exercise will use a number of stomach or abdominal muscles as well as the PC.

Do ten of each of these exercises as a set. Do one set two to three times a day. Increase the number of times you do them a day. You should notice improvement after a few months, so don't get discouraged during the first couple of weeks.

You can do these exercises any time during daily activities which don't require a lot of moving around – driving your car, watching TV, doing the dishes. When you start, you'll probably notice the muscle not wanting to stay contracted during the exercises, or that you can't do the fast Kegel very fast or evenly. Keep at it. In a week or two, you'll probably notice that you can control it quite well.