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How to do Kegel exercises

Find the right muscles. Insert a finger inside your vagina and try to squeeze the surrounding muscles. You should feel your vagina tighten and your pelvic floor move upward. Then relax your muscles and feel your pelvic floor return to the starting position. You can also try to stop the flow of urine when you urinate. If you succeed, you've got the basic move. Don't make a habit of starting and stopping your urine stream, though. Doing Kegel exercises with a full bladder or while emptying your bladder can actually weaken the muscles, as well as lead to incomplete emptying of the bladder — which increases the risk of a urinary tract infection.

Perfect your technique. Empty your bladder and sit or lie down. Contract your pelvic floor muscles, hold to a count of five; then relax for a count of five. Try it four or five times in a row. Work up to keeping the muscles contracted to a count of ten, then relaxing for a count of ten.

Maintain your focus. For best results, tighten only your pelvic floor muscles. Be careful not to flex the muscles in your abdomen, thighs or buttocks. Continue to breathe during the exercises.

Repeat two times a day. Aim for at least two sets of 20 repetitions a day. An easy way to remember is to do a set in the car when you get to a red light!

When to expect results

If you do your Kegel exercises faithfully, you can expect to see results within about eight to 12 weeks. For some women, the improvement is dramatic. For others, Kegel exercises simply keep problems from getting any worse. For continued benefits, make Kegel exercises a permanent part of your daily routine.

Gynecology * Gynecologic Oncology * Advanced Laparoscopic Surgery & Vaginal Surgery
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